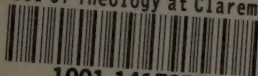


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NARRATIVE

OF

WILLIAM SWAYZE,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

INCLUDING HIS

JUVENILE MISSION.

VOLUME I.

"Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."—DANIEL, XII, 4.

CINCINNATI:

PRINTED AT THE METHODIST BOOK ROOM.

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1839.

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DEDICATION.

This work is respectfully dedicated to the Rev. CHARLES ELLIOTT, as a token of the author's high regard for his learning; but more especially, as an expression of his warm esteem for him as a minister and fellow laborer in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, in direct reference to that indefatigable and onward course pursued by him as his successor on the old Ohio district, A. D., 1823. WM. SWAYZE.

Cincinnati, O., May 1, 1839.

PREFACE.

IN presenting this small volume to the public, the author has but one leading object in view, which is, to aid the cause of evangelical piety. However small the effort, it may be considered the honest production of one whose life, from boyhood, has been employed in some portion of the extensive fields of Methodist itinerancy. He has therefore been induced to call forward such attendant circumstances as otherwise might have been lost. With the view, if no more, to elicit attention, exhibit, illustrate, and apply moral and religious instruction, he has attempted to gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost. He has endeavored to present such attendant occurrences as involve character, however remote; with all due caution, avoiding exaggeration, with the distinct view to profit all, and offend none; likewise to guard against sectarian and party matters, as far as the development of facts would admit; to make honorable mention of his benefactors and friends,

rendering honor and tribute to whom they were due, giving names as far as practicable, if recollected. As this volume embraces so inconsiderable a portion of his regular itinerancy, it would be natural to suppose the succeeding, if published, for matter and variety, would be more interesting. This, however, is not the case with its humble author, as the occurrences of childhood and youth have their special interests, when connected with religious experience and early ministerial operations, &c. It will be seen that the writer properly commenced and increased his gospel labors as time and circumstances seemed to justify. And why are not ministerial labors as acceptable if performed at the altar, fireside, shop or field, as if done in the most systematic and ministerial line of operation? It was said to those servants who were to procure guests, "*Go out quickly into the streets, lanes, hedges, and highways, invite, compel,*" &c. The ultimate object appears to have been, to procure in season the much wanted guests for this great supper. Operations of this character, more immediately connected with youth, prior to

his being united to a conference, are what the author has denominated his *Juvenile Mission*. It will be expected that all due allowance will be made, in particular by the christian reader, in reference to arrangement, language, &c.; considering the remoteness of time, want of documents, infirmities attendant upon age, &c. In conclusion, with all due submission, he desires to consecrate this imperfect production to that Being who hath said, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand." He most sincerely and devoutly implores the Divine benediction to rest upon, and remain with, all those into whose hands this little volume may fall.

WILLIAM SWAYZE.

Deerfield, Ohio, March 10, 1839.

NARRATIVE.

CHAPTER I.

Birth—Mother's Solitude—Her Pious Example.

I was born in Sussex county, state of New Jersey, November 18, 1784, near that noted village of Asbury, which received its name at the time of laying the corner-stone of the first house for divine worship within its precincts. The venerable Bishop Asbury, accompanied by the Rev. Shadrach Bostwick, was present, and delivered an appropriate discourse on the occasion. The village has since borne his imperishable name. I was the youngest of ten children—seven sons and three daughters. My father was remotely of French, and my mother of Holland extraction; both members of the Presbyterian church, in which they had all their children baptized. About these days the first Wesleyan pioneers, Greentree, Hagerty, Cooper, and others, came into our region of country. My mother, being a great lover of meetings, went to hear one of these strange preachers. Perhaps the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well was not more surprised at the conversation of our blessed Savior, than she was

with the doctrine, preaching, &c., of this wonderful preacher. Her language on her return was of similar import: "Come and see a man which told me all things that ever I did." There being another appointment, she succeeded in securing the attendance of my father and others, notwithstanding there was much alarm already produced in the neighborhood, the preacher being stigmatized as a false prophet. We presume the preaching of the Savior did not appear more marvelous to Nicodemus, than the preaching of this Wesleyan missionary did to my father. He returned with it sounding in his ears, "Ye must be born again." They formed a society, my parents constituting a part; from which time their house became the preachers' home. Such was the maternal solicitude of this excellent mother, she was wont to take myself and twin brother with her to meetings. The distance not being great, she would carry us alternately in her arms, while the other walked by her side, aided by the mother's hand. It was likewise her usual practice to convey us to the place of her evening devotions, which was literally within the cleft of the rock, there being a large rock not far distant. On its north side was a cavity, the mouth of which was shaded by a thicket of alder bushes. This was her bower of prayer. In fancy I yet view that venerable form, the pic-

ture of undissembled piety; her elevated eyes and bedewed cheek speak the intensity and fervor of her devotion. At the same time, I view two infants encircled in her fond embrace, even while in the act of offering up her evening oblation to that Being, who represents himself as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. However strange it may appear, my first recollections are in reference to religious matters; which I attribute to the early example and pious instruction of a godly mother. As a further proof of her maternal solicitude, the following may be added. However, it will be remembered, her then present views and feelings as touching these matters were but of recent date, being consequent upon those strange things so recently brought to her ears. My eldest brother having recently returned from one of his juvenile excursions, being wicked, proud, and vain; much attached to the ball chamber, theatrical amusements, &c.; on his approach to the barn he heard the voice of prayer, and instantly recognized it to be his mother's—but what was still more cutting to this thoughtless youth, she was praying for him. “What!” said he, “praying in the day-time!” However, this day-time praying pursued him by night as well as day, until it terminated in his conversion.

When about the age of six years, we were called to part with this best of mothers, she

being afflicted. For as soon as the above designated brother came into her room, she said to him, "David, call them all in; I shall be dead in two hours." The family instantly gathered around the dying parent. This was a scene never to be forgotten. She commenced her dying valedictory first with my father, and so on, from the eldest to the youngest; when she called out, "My little twins, come to mother." We instantly rushed to her fond, yet last embrace, and received her blessing; when she committed her family to the Divine protection, myself and infant brother to the special attention of her two eldest sons, A. and D. Now she uttered her last words, which were, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." I am told that the two hours expired with the trembling taper. My reader will pardon this apparent digression, when he reflects, *this was my mother*. I consider it involving circumstances of more consequence to me than almost any thing connected with the history of my life. Her funeral obsequies were duly attended to by the Rev. G. Bailey, of the Methodist Episcopal church.

Such is the influence of early habits, that myself and little brother, on our return from the burial, retired to this solitary retreat above designated, and knelt down and thought about past scenes, if no more,

"Ere yet our feeble thoughts had learned,
'To form themselves in prayer."

Such was our attachment to these "circuit riders," as they were then called, we gave ourselves names after two favorite preachers, retaining the christian part of our own, and formed a small circuit, which we traveled, preaching alternately; the above designated bower was our principal chapel. This was our Sabbath's employment. Why not a small substitute for Sabbath schools?

CHAPTER II.

Moral Reflections on the preceding Chapter.

WE give the following reflections, as authorized from the above.

1st. We say mothers should invite their infants, before evening retirement, to kneel at their feet, and there learn to repeat that prayer which Jesus taught his disciples; likewise to kneel at the family altar, if it should be even necessary, to secure obedience, to administer suitable correction. Thus they will learn, if no more, to revere their Creator in his ordinances.

2d. As a consequent result, ministers, on their pastoral visits, will have free access to those children to give moral and religious instructions, while parents can take them to the house of God, which is their imperious duty,

without the painful apprehension of being annoyed, pulpit exposures, &c.

3d. That mothers are, in some sense, the originators of infant minds, giving them form and character. That the pious example of mothers, accompanied with moral and religious instructions, makes deep and lasting impressions on the infant mind, not to be forgotten while memory retains its seat in the human breast.

In view of these things, how important is female education, connected with genuine piety. We will further add the late admirable institution, the Sabbath school. How appropriate is that saying of the wise man, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

It will be seen from the subjoined communication, that extraordinaries (why not in this case?), providential, are still the common lot of man. However, the name of this preacher was familiar, and some traits in his person, physical form, &c. (perhaps from some few years succeeding acquaintance); yet the sermon and its then attendant circumstances were entirely lost to my recollection, and not possessing documents to which reference could be made, and supposing there was not a person living, much less at so remote a distance, both in reference to time and place, to give me the smallest information; but such is the

fact—I recently met in Cincinnati the Rev. brother to whom reference is made. This, after some half century's variegated scenes had passed over our heads. This venerable brother is now rising his 74th year, exhibiting a vivacity and sprightliness seldom met with in one of his age, while the horizon of his mind appears cloudless. May it thus remain until succeeded by a brighter day! full tinged with immortality's morning bloom.

“DEAR BROTHER:—In compliance with your wishes, I have been examining and looking over my papers, to find the document of which I spoke as having reference to your pious mother now deceased. The sermon I preached on the occasion of her death, &c., which appears to be misplaced or lost in the lapse of time; but as I am apprised you are about to publish her memoir, and knowing that the smallest remains of departed worth are of great value to surviving friends, and might be in this case of some service to all, I present you in substance what I named to you a few days since, which is at your disposal. I can assure you it has been preserved some fifty years, written in characters more indelible than those of the lost manuscript; and what has tended to familiarize this subject with me is, I have had frequent occasion to relate it in my ministerial performances, which was as follows: A few days previous to her death, I called to pay her a visit. In the

course of my conversation with her, I asked her whether she bore her affliction patiently. She answered, 'O yes, my brother, I think I do.' She then turned to those who waited upon her, and asked them whether it was not so; they answered in the affirmative. Then she replied, 'If my heavenly Father should see proper to lay heavier afflictions upon me, I feel perfectly resigned to his will; for the greater my pain, the sooner my end.' Her death was truly triumphant, as I was credibly informed.

Yours, in the bonds of the gospel,

G. BAILEY.

Brother WM. SWAYZE.

Cincinnati, May 29, 1839."

CHAPTER III.

Thoughts on Anti-Christian Marriages.

WE have to lament that at so early a period of our narrative, we are met with an occurrence we could wish to have passed over unnoticed; but as it necessarily involves a principle we feel in duty bound to expose by setting forth its evil tendencies, we will therefore but merely name it, with a passing remark.

The particulars to which I refer had their origin in my father's second marriage (my

reader will notice, that the sequel has direct reference to principle), which took place perhaps without due regard to the apostle's admonition, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers;" that is, according to its legitimate and direct sense, a wicked, unconverted person, Jew or Gentile, it matters not. As it is usual in apostasy for something to precede as preparatory, we may here note, first, the neglect of the family altar; then the ordinances of the church; and so on, to final abandonment. This was followed by a dispersion of the once united and happy family. Only three remained out of nine, which included a beloved sister; who continued, perhaps, for the purpose of assisting in taking care of her mother's infants. Her kind attention to us ought never to be forgotten. To add to this unhappy state of things, the old mansion, which had been the preachers' home, was soon forsaken by those once welcome messengers of Christ. How important then, is it, for every one to reflect and ponder well before they take a step fraught with such serious consequences. A mistake, an oversight in this matter, may fix a destiny which will be remediless. If importance is to be attached to the first, how much more to a second alliance of this kind? Not unfrequently age, family matters, &c., go to augment its importance. Perhaps there is no transaction in the history of human af-

fairs fraught with more serious consequences. Doctor Clarke, in reference to this momentous subject, uses these emphatic words: "Know ye not that every connection ye form in this life, will have a greater or less influence on your future destiny." We say there is no compromise in this matter, while light and darkness, Christ and Belial, the temple of the living God and idolaters, heaven and hell, possess such an infinite disparity in reference to quality and character. Look at the relation which the Lord Jesus sustains to his church. He claims her as his spouse, his bride, mother, sister and brother. Likewise, in reference to that kingdom he establishes in the soul of the believer, he says, "I will dwell in them and walk in them." These considerations, when viewed in their proper light and bearing, fix an insurmountable barrier against all coalitions and alliances of this character. Ignorance, when viewed in the gospel sense, consequent upon deception, hypocrisy, &c., is the only admissible plea on the part of the transgressor. Otherwise, if saved, it is so as by fire; yet they must sustain an irreparable loss. Thus we see, their salvation is not impossible. It will be understood, we are not speaking of civil or political compacts; but of a union which the great Jehovah contemplated in the creation and organization of man. A being so fearfully and wonderfully made, the twain becomes one. He is a subject of laws in re-

ference to the marriage relation, similar to those by which the connection between soul and body is perpetuated; a union which nothing but death can sever or dissolve. That a matrimonial connection virtually between believers and unbelievers, was prohibited by the Almighty under the Jewish economy, will be admitted. We ask any man to show us when or where this prohibition has ever been abrogated, either in whole or in part. If this restriction, as some have supposed, had direct reference to the advent, humanity, &c., of Jesus Christ, I ask, is the relation between God and his church changed in any shape or form, so as to lessen its importance. When or where was it ever said under the Jewish dispensation, we will take up our abode with you, yea, in you? This was spoken in reference to the present dispensation. Indeed there never was a crime committed, either by a nation or an individual, that has borne more signal marks of the Divine displeasure. Was it not the grand procuring cause of the woes and miseries of this devoted people?

CHAPTER IV.

Anti-Christian Marriages continued, with advice to
Pious Females.

MAY I be permitted to pursue this subject a

little further, as we view it of vital importance at the present day. Alas! how many of our modern Israel are realizing the same curse, consequent upon a similar departure. What says the apostle? "These things happened unto them for an example, and are written for your admonition, that ye should not lust against Christ, as they also lusted." Again he says, "If God spared not the natural branches (that is, the Jews), take heed that he spare not thee." Therefore let it be specifically and distinctly understood, that if a member of the church of Christ—we mean, a true believer, in the evangelical sense—does deliberately, willingly, and knowingly, enter into this kind of affinity or union with a son or daughter of Belial, no matter what the appearances, worldly emoluments, &c., may be, he or she does it at the peril of their precious souls. We close this subject with the following illustrative and instructive narrative, which is respectfully addressed to our pious young sisters: A certain Miss C. B., a religious young lady of respectability, with whom I was personally acquainted, upwards of thirty years since, in the state of Delaware, was addressed by a young gentleman, a Mr. H., whose family, person, character and property, were every way calculated to attract and captivate her youthful mind. But with this young man, the one thing needful was wanting; a jewel of more

value than all the delusive charms of riches or personal accomplishments. We may add, that she had the almost irresistible persuasions of her friends on both sides, there being a remote family connection. The time at length arrived when she must give the decisive answer; in view of which, she consulted with such as prudence would direct, and especially with that Being whose counsels never fail. She fasted and prayed much, but received no satisfactory evidence until the night previous to her giving the expected answer; which was received when on her way from a prayer meeting, in company with her sister. The night being very dark, she fell a few steps in the rear, when suddenly a light shone around her, if not above the brightness of the sun, yet sufficient to convince her there was something of importance at hand; when lo! a voice, as she afterwards affirmed, proceeding from the effulgent blaze, proclaimed, "What fellowship hath light with darkness, or the temple of God with idols?" She turned to her sister and said, "The Lord has convinced me that I must not marry Mr. H." Her sister saw the light, but no more. The next day she communicated her objection to her friend. This was a Providential interference, as the sequel abundantly demonstrated.

But alas! how different was the following:
A young lady of equal standing in point of

character, who resided within the bounds of old Litchfield circuit, when I traveled it in 1813, it is presumed without due reflection, prayer, or consultation, accepted the proposals of an irreligious young man, who gave many flattering promises of fidelity, with manifest regard for religious institutions, ministers, &c. But the class-book soon told the sad tale, that all was not well with her. Being directed by the class-leader, father Sherman, I called to inquire the cause of her delinquency. On entering her dwelling, she took me by the hand, with expressions indicative of joy and grief. She seated herself by a window, and looked intently towards the barn, when behold! this pretended friend to preachers and religious institutions, arrived, and ordered me out of his house, with many threats. She retired to weep, "Farewell, ye ministers of the sanctuary; adieu, ye blessed ordinances of my Savior. Farewell, my old class-mates; your society is forfeited, and I am doomed to a life of exile from the house of God, and the society of his people."

CHAPTER V.

A Visit to the North—A Separation—A narrow escape from Drowning—An Indian Massacre.

THE following will present clouds, if no

more. How mysterious and inexplicable are the ways of Providence. The time has now arrived for these little companions in tribulation to separate. Our two eldest brothers, D. and A., arrived from Maryland, with a view to redeem their pledge to a departed mother. Father consented to let one go, if we would consent to be separated. Through much persuasion I consented to give up my brother John for a season, however painful. A little previous to this I heard the first gospel sermon of which I have any distinct recollection, delivered by the Rev. Wm. Budd, from Matthew, chap. xx, ver. 44: "Therefore, be ye also ready," &c. This produced as powerful conviction as I ever experienced. If I then had had suitable care and attention as formerly, it is highly probable it would have terminated in my conversion to God. Before I pass I will note, about this time I was precipitated into the fore-bay of a mill, where the water was six or seven feet deep. How long I was under the water I cannot tell. However, I well recollect that I sank and rose again the third time; and what has ever appeared surprisingly strange, that I was perfectly sensible at the time. I felt myself advancing towards an outlet which must have precipitated me several feet among the rocks. I was perfectly calm and collected; no feelings of strangulation or alarm, although I was fully aware that I was drowning. I conclude

that this is one of the most comfortable and painless deaths that ever was realized. While rising to the surface, perhaps for the last time, a man sprang to my relief. If not a brand plucked from the burning, I seemed to be an inanimate mass pulled out of the water. With some exertion, resuscitation was effected. "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" May I not say, what is childhood, without a special protecting Providence? My early schooling was now in progress, which, for want of suitable books and competent teachers, was much retarded. Drunken schoolmasters were very common in those days.

It is now about three years since the aforementioned separation from my twin brother (which seemed like an age), and finds me in the neighborhood of twelve years old, when my brother Matthias arrived, having been absent for several years; his place of residence was on the head-waters of the Delaware. With much persuasion he prevailed on my father to let me return with him. He was engaged in building mills, lumbering, &c., and was among the first adventurers that rafted down the wild, overwhelming Delaware. A voyage down this stream was at that day considered almost as adventurous as that of Columbus. I soon found myself situated in a remote, snowy region, yet always clothed with living verdure (the evergreen). The surface variegated, from the cloud-capt moun-

tain down to the little hillock, or cradle mound. A sterile soil, producing a kind of moss, composed of an infinite number of small fibers, so interwoven as to form a kind of elastic carpet, for softness but little inferior to a bed of down. Here the sportsman and his game were supplied with bed and bedding. Pine lumber was the staple commodity of this region. The inhabitants, for kindness to strangers, activity, health, industry, and what is styled civil recreation, were unrivaled. Gospel and gospel piety appeared to be strangers here. With the breaking of an arm, and nearly the loss of life by the measles, together with the acquisition of some of the rudiments of vice, I wound up the year. The spring arrives—the days of the flood are at hand—the building of rafts, &c. All is bustle and commotion. Before I take my departure from this land of pits and snares, I will narrate an occurrence which transpired about these days, in this region. A certain Messrs. Cowley and Sawyer, gentlemen of first respectability, erected a saw-mill, with a dwelling not far distant, which was occupied by their families. While employed at their mill, in the dusk of the evening, they saw five Indians approach their house. They immediately repaired to the place, when lo! they beheld a scene of horror which fancy may realize, but language fails to describe. Their children butchered in the presence of

their distracted mothers, lay bleeding and gasping on the floor. On the approach of their wonted protectors, the women made their escape to the woods; but the men, after a desperate and ineffectual resistance, were bound and led away into captivity. What must have been the feelings of these mothers, when they returned to their house of human carnage? All is gone, except their slaughtered children. This scene being enveloped in the melancholy gloom of night, reflection must supply the place of vision. My informant stated (who was one of the exiles), that their place of destination was the Canadas; consequently, their route was northwardly. The Indians standing in fear of pursuit, used every exertion to effect an escape, which made it hard for the prisoners. Their ammunition having failed, soon reduced them to a state of starvation. The sufferings of Mr. Cowley in particular, who was then in delicate health, surrounded with the infirmities of age, were intolerable. After some weeks in this forlorn situation, while lying on their bed of earth, with an Indian on each side and two between them, the fifth being placed as sentinel in front near the fire, all of them being sound asleep at the time except Cowley, who lay with death-like stillness, deploring the past, realizing the present, and dreading the future. "If I attempt," thought he, "to wake Sawyer, I disturb the

Indians, when all is over; to leave him behind, I cannot." He finally resolved to make a desperate effort to effect their deliverance, although success appeared to be veiled in uncertainty. He accordingly raised his emaciated body, with the aid of his hands, which were pinioned behind him, and moved slowly and cautiously on his knees to the place where the knives and tomahawks were deposited. He then severed the cords with which he was bound, and returning with a knife and tomahawk, dispatched four of the Indians, without waking his companion cut loose his bandage, when a noise from the dying aroused the sentinel; at which instant Cowley threw away his weapons, lest they should be turned against him. Resistance, he supposed, was vain; he immediately fell into the lion-like grip of his antagonist, who dragged him towards the place of the knives and tomahawks. He hallooed for Sawyer, who sprang up in a fright, and seizing the sentinel's gun, commenced snapping it at the Indian. In vain did the agonizing Cowley direct his companion, "Throw down that gun—there is no load in it. Get a knife, and come to my assistance." At length, becoming fully awake, he did as he was directed; whereupon the Indian disentangling himself, effected his escape. As a reward for this act of unparalleled heroism, Gen. Washington presented said Cowley with a medal. Hav-

ing destroyed all the Indians' equipages, reserving to themselves a tomahawk and knife, they took up their homeward march through the wilderness. After wandering for many anxious days and nights, emaciated with hunger, and worn down with fatigue, they arrived at their welcome home; Cowley having traveled some distance on his hands and knees, being too weak to walk erect.

CHAPTER VI.

A Voyage down the River Delaware—A manifest display of the Divine displeasure against Profanity and Pleasure Taking.

I now enter on board of our mastless, if not deckless, vessel. Our captain was a decent drunkard, if such a being can exist. The fastenings being removed, away we go with nearly the rapidity of flying. Truly the old adage applies here: "Work for life." No idlers while passing down this rushing, meandering current. We had an Indian captive on board, taken when a child, now on his way to the Minesinks, in quest of his mother. All went well until we turned a short bend, with incalculable speed. In the middle of the foaming current, we came in contact with a large tree; its roots being inverted, perhaps fastened among the rocks,

presented a formidable front. Nothing could exceed the scene of destruction that followed. The raft was apparently dashed into a thousand pieces. Our captive, raising his Indian yell, which, together with the roaring of the flood, produced the most alarming sensations in my mind. The first place I found myself after this dreadful concussion, was standing on the inverted roots of the tree, wet and shivering. All were gone except the captive, who was apparently standing on the water; however, there were some boards under his feet, sunken beneath the surface. As his float was passing, he called out to me to jump on. I sprang towards him and landed on the boards, which carried us safely to the shore, after floating some distance. Our men were all saved on detached pieces of the wreck. O merciful Lord! what is man, that thou art mindful of him? My brother being detained, we re-shipped the following day on board of another raft; but dangers still awaited us. We soon witnessed a scene, if possible, more alarming than the former. It was a kind of cataract, whether natural or artificial I know not. But I well recollect our pilot missed the shoot, and we dashed over with fearful rapidity, completely immersed in water. I saved myself by holding to a withe. After floating a short distance from the cataract, the raft arose to the surface, much shattered. But no stopping here

for the time being. After passing many falls; floating among rocks, mountains, and winding vales, say some two hundred miles, we arrived in sight of the blue mountains, where to all human appearance, when a short distance off, it would be thought that the river must stop its course, or find a subterraneous channel, there being no break or avenue to be seen or imagined. On our approach the river took a sudden and unexpected turn. Here we entered what is called "The Water Gap." The frowning rocks rose on either side to an immense height, presenting an appearance awfully sublime. Perhaps some seventy feet above the surface of the water, under a projecting precipice, the passenger beholds an immense quantity of bees issuing forth; the extent of their hive, or time of deposit, has never been ascertained. Here are materials in abundance for the poet. Passing through this gap, New Jersey on the east and Pennsylvania on the west, with all their delightful scenery, bursts unexpectedly on the view, perhaps only equaled by the prospect from Pisgah's summit. We hurried down the rapid current to the neighborhood of the Foul Rift, or mountain cataract. Here we stopped on the Pennsylvania side, nearly opposite the town of Belvidere, where we remained several days for a proper stage of water, to descend the Rift. We lodged at the ferry-house, where all was tumult and

bustle. The people were passing and repassing in crowds, to see the wonders in Belvidere, as this strange phenomenon was published in the periodicals of that day. I will only give it a passing notice. I obtained my information from what was called good authority, which included the landlord, together with our own crew; as indisposition, in conjunction with the difficulties in passing the river, prevented me from going to see for myself. It was said that there was a ball, or a dance, as it was then called, appointed at a public house in said village by a company of infidels. While in their highest glee, one blasphemously declared, he would dance until the devil came; and another, that he would dance to hell. It was stated without contradiction, that the dance was then in progress, which was the third day. The house had been vacated by its affrighted inmates. The two above designated persons, the first of whom had realized his fate, and was seen dead upon the floor; and the second was still dancing, presenting a most haggard and ghastly appearance. Such was the united testimony of those who went over to ascertain facts. Many other alarming circumstances were said to have occurred. Making all allowance for the credulity of the times, and the exaggerations of wonder circulators, I am inclined to believe there was a shocking, manifest display of the Divine displeasure

against the blasphemer and pleasure taker. After the detention of a day or two, we resumed our voyage down the river, and soon entered the much dreaded Foul Rift, which at that day presented a most terrific aspect, dashing over and among the rocks with almost the rapidity of thought. It was said that we ran a mile in a minute. Let the sons of Neptune boast of their wonderful exploits, in navigating the broad ocean; these hardy sons of the mountain can vie with the best of them, in point of courage and enterprise. We soon arrived at Easton, situated on the west bank of the Delaware,

CHAPTER VII.

First Visit to Maryland—Difficulty in a Storm on the Chesapeake.

BEING only a passenger, and having obtained permission of my father to visit my friends in Maryland, I took my leave of the raft-men, and proceeded to Philadelphia by land; where I arrived, after traveling about fifty miles on foot. It was the first time that I ever was in this great city. I saw much to interest the country boy. Having heard it stated, that they were not unfrequently the subjects of observation and remark in places like this, I looked well to my movements,

and kept my eyes within due bounds. Having no acquaintance in the city, I proceeded to a sister's of mine in the state of Delaware, where I arrived the second day, and met with a cordial reception. Found them all well, and tarried several days. My brother-in-law, W. Price, was one of the excellent of the earth, a tanner and farmer by occupation, abundantly supplied with the good things of this life, and possessing a blooming hope of a more durable inheritance. If I had spent the past year in society like this, it would have been of infinite service to me. The past is remediless, but the future remains for improvement. Being furnished with a convenient mode of conveyance, I started in company with my sister Elizabeth, and arrived the same day at the residence of my elder brother, on the bank of the beautiful Chesapeake, opposite Charleston, Md. Here I met with my brothers Amos, David, and John; sisters Jane and Elizabeth, after an absence of some years. Here was a house, as the former, like that of Obodedom. I find myself now situated among my mother's children. But alas! my twin brother John, for whom I felt a more than ordinary attachment, was wild and hardened in sin, carried away with an unquenchable attachment for a sailor's life. His floating idol was then in full view, lying at anchor. I went with him on board, and spent my first night in Mary-

land. But my sleep was much interrupted in the contemplation of future scenes. I had a dream which I have ever considered as premonitory. The transactions of the judgment day were portrayed to my fancy, in a manner which language cannot describe. Perhaps it was intended to produce a reaction in my mind, as many incentives were presented in the former part of the evening, calculated to enlist me in favor of a mariner's life. I will here relate a circumstance that transpired some two or three years thereafter, which completely settled that matter with me. I was induced to take a short voyage with this brother, who now had the charge of a small craft. While making a south-westwardly course on a southern breeze, he standing at the helm, commenced preaching, or repeating a sermon he had heard from a Methodist preacher (he was proverbial for memorizing), which he concluded in language too horrid to be repeated. However wicked myself at the time, my soul recoiled at this blasphemous exhibition. I requested him to desist, when lo! our attention was arrested by flashes of lightning in quick succession, from a distant, black cloud, in the northwest, which, with a tremendous roar of wind, portended the approach of danger. This was soon realized in its most alarming aspect. Before the vessel could be prepared, it came with all its resistless fury. It seem-

ed to say, sink, kill, and damn these presumptuous rebels. And what added to the horrors of the scene, was the recollection of the Heaven-daring provocation which had just preceded. The warring elements soon placed our little bark on her beam ends, carrying before it the windward rigging. The halyards of the mainsail refusing to render through its tackle, prevented lowering this sail. Our John, it appears, reserved the application of his sermon until now, when he poured it out upon the lightnings, thunders, and wind. An expression which I now recollect was, "Blow, devil, blow." He left the helm in a demon-like rage, and ascended the mast, removed the obstruction, and came down, bringing the sail and all with him. The vessel now righted, and veered before the wind. Having the sail reset, she rushed ahead, burying her bows in the foaming element. We were soon taken up on a sand shoal, where we remained until morning, under the most alarming apprehensions. I well recollect of repeating to myself those admirable lines of the poet, which seemed as a kind of buoy to my sinking spirit:

"Though Satan enrages the wind and the tide,
Yct Scripture engages, the Lord will provide."

On the ensuing day, by the aid of tide and wind, we made our way off. Soon after this I returned to my elder brothers, where I re-

mained sometime, removing alternately among my relations; my mind being like the troubled waters. Truly, there is no peace to the wicked. Feeling a peculiar anxiety for the welfare of this brother, we prevailed on him to leave the bay, and learn the tanning and currying with our brother-in-law, W. P. I also commenced learning the hatter's trade, in an adjoining neighborhood, with a Mr. B. John left in a short time; it was concluded he had gone to sea. This produced much uneasiness with us. I also left and went to Baltimore, partly with a view to inquire after him, where I found him in a currier's shop. He informed me that he preferred learning his trade in a city. I procured a place with a Mr. W., and commenced learning the house-joiner's trade. Our brother D. soon arrived, and informed us that he had written and received an answer from father, who expressed a wish that we should learn trades. Of course, all was well. However, my mate soon left again, and resumed his sailor's life. I remained until my guardian brother came and took up the indenture; as the man I was with was not a suitable person to have a boy, being too much of a boy himself, unsteady, trifling, &c. I was now placed under the care of Mr. J. Ennis, on Fell's Point. Here I found a home, with every facility of learning my trade. I now attended church more regularly than ever before;

however, not confined to any particular denomination. I should have preferred the Methodists, if their preaching had not disturbed my conscience so much. About these days I attended Gen. Washington's funeral; and heard Bishop Coke preach his last sermon, in Baltimore. Both these great men are now no more; one lies beneath a monument in the neighborhood of Mount Vernon, North America, and the other is interred in the Indian Ocean.

"The tall, the wise, the reverend head,
Must lie as low as ours."

CHAPTER VIII.

My Awakening and Conversion.

A PERIOD now arrives, which, although thirty-eight years have since expired, yet it appears but as yesterday. May the 20th, A. D., 1800, about the 17th year of my age. On the Saturday preceding I called on our pious servant, Peter, a native of Africa, who is of precious memory to me, to aid in grinding my pen-knife; when he inquired with much solicitude, how it was that I never attended meeting? "What meeting, Peter?" said I. He replied, "De Metadist." I answered, "Peter, I am too wicked." He rejoined, "You are de very person ought to go and get

good." I finally told him that I would go the succeeding Sabbath. However, this promise was more with a design to please him, than to attend the meeting. He added, "Dare is great many great preachers in de city. It is conference time." I accordingly went to his meeting, which was in the old Methodist Chapel on the Point; seated myself on the front seat in the gallery. The first thing that arrested my attention was a number of elegant, large gilt letters, well arranged in circular form, behind the preacher, on the wall, which read, THOU, GOD, SEEST ME; with the quotation prefixed, Gen., xvi, 13; and heard the Rev. J. Chambers, sen., who was a noted revivalist in his day. While he was preaching in demonstration of the Spirit, the Word came with power to my heart. A sudden trembling seized me. I thought the eyes of all in the gallery were upon me. It appeared I was "judged of all, and condemned by all." I resisted with all my remaining strength; afraid to rise and leave the place, lest I should expose myself. I succeeded finally in getting down, by taking hold of the seats and hand-railing of the gallery. I directly left the crowd, like Cowper's stricken deer, with the arrow deeply fixed, and fled to the Commons, without looking back until I reached the Potter's Field. Here I seated myself on the top of a tombstone, and thought much; reflecting on the

past, in perplexity about the present, and with awful forebodings anticipating the future. But what shall I do? To seek religion, if there be such a thing, will be all in vain; for you have repeatedly tried to no purpose. And thus it will terminate again. Put it off; there is time enough yet; old age, a sick bed, or a dying day, will abundantly answer for these purposes. At this critical juncture the first text that I ever heard preached, as already noticed, came to my mind with due weight: "Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not," &c. Upon the whole, I concluded to attend meeting the ensuing evening, and retired to a secluded spot to pray. Here I remained until about the going down of the sun. But all was dark—dark. I returned, attended meeting, and concluded to keep all to myself. At the close of the sermon a number rushed to the altar for prayers; but I waited for some one to come and give me an invitation, as I discovered it was done with others. How active our brethren ought to be at these seasons, to go out quickly and pass by none; to invite, &c. True, the Priest and Levite passed me on either side; I returned as I came, weak and wounded, sick and sore. I spent the most of this sorrowful night groaning, weeping, and trying to pray. I felt that the pains of hell had got hold of me. I went to meeting the succeeding night, but obtained no re-

help. Like the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, my path was intercepted. I returned as before, and spent the night in my chamber, while keen despair seemed to spread her raven wings over my sinking head. I said, I will go once more, and if there is no relief, all is over with me. However, I will, as Baranous did, put myself in the way. I accordingly placed myself in the aisle, and looked around to see if I could discover an anxious eye directed towards me; as I had now come to the conclusion, that if I ventured forward I should not be a welcome guest: when lo! an angel of mercy, J. Sampson, a class-leader, came and placed one arm around my neck, and took my hand in his, and led me to the altar, knelt down by my side, and prayed for me. My distress now appeared unutterable, and thus continued during the meeting. Perhaps the Maries experienced similar feelings at Joseph's tomb, while groping in the dark vault, when their hopes were fled: "He is not here." Thus passed the third night. In the morning I retired to an upper chamber, unoccupied at the time, recently finished. The building joined the one in which I resided. There was a scaffold in front now occupied by the painter, who was penciling the brick. I saw him descend through the third story window, to which I immediately repaired, not reflecting whither I went. I ascended through the

window on to the scaffold, and looked over the city; but all was gloom. Pressed by this unutterable load, when all on a sudden I felt a touch on my forehead like the blaze of a candle (but no pain), which immediately ran through my whole body like an electric shock. My load was gone, and I felt as calm as infant innocence. I looked east, west, north, and south—all appeared glorious—a new city—a new world. It came as perceptible as if announced by an audible voice: "Son, thy sins, which were many, are all forgiven thee." Ah! thought I, this is what the Methodists call getting converted. If my faith could have furnished me with wings, I should soon have published this to the ends of the earth. But mortality confined me. My feet must supply the place of wings. I accordingly descended, and ran down the street, calling from house to house, announcing the angelic message, peace, good will, &c. This excursion closed in a store, belonging to Mr. J. On entering, his son, who was standing behind the counter, said, "William, what is the matter?" I replied, "The matter is, God has converted my soul." "I wish," said he, "I felt as you do," and began to weep. I sprang over the counter, and prayed with my first mourner. When I arose, the store was filled with astonished spectators.

CHAPTER IX.

The Conversion of a Roman Catholic.

IN the above it will be seen, I have had occasion to name the individuals that were made the instruments, under God, of my spiritual deliverance; the one who, through much persuasion, prevailed on me to attend the meeting, as referred to, the preacher who preached the sermon that was made effectual in my awakening, together with the kind brother, not the least in point of benefit to me, that sought me out in the crowd, and led me to the altar of prayer. Would it be incorrect to say, that the man who would treat with inattention or discourtesy the individual that was made the instrument of his conversion, would not be worthy of the christian name, if he was even met in a land of paganism, however small or humble such an individual might be? There are a few things worthy of note, which I will here name, in reference to the last designated brother (I had it from himself), which it is presumed took place about A. D., 1790. He was, at the time above referred to, a class-leader of reputable standing, and since a preacher. From his own statement, it appeared that he was a Canadian Frenchman by birth, early initiated into all the rights and ceremonies of the Roman Catholic religion; a ship-rigger

by trade. But having occasion to make a short excursion down the Chesapeake in a small craft, when he was overtaken by a violent storm; at the same time shrouded in the sable shades of night, death presenting itself in its most alarming aspect. After several fruitless attempts to make a harbor, he took in his sail, let go his anchor, committing all to the mercy of the winds and waves; placing himself in a small contracted berth, which at the time he supposed would supply his coffin. Under these circumstances, he was induced to look to that Being that controls the warring elements. However, enveloped in all this natural and moral gloom, knowing of no other medium of approach to the Divine Being but through the one in which he had been taught; he accordingly took his rosary, or beads, from his pocket, and commenced counting, we conclude in the spirit of honest devotion; when suddenly a light broke forth, if no more, sufficient to dispel the moral gloom that then covered his much agitated mind. Now joy and peace sprang up—the tempest within subsided, and a great calm ensued. He instantly left his cabin, which he had viewed upon entering as his tomb, and came forth upon the deck; and behold, it was all calm without, truly emblematical of what he enjoyed within, a clear sky and a smooth sea; his little bark majestically riding at anchor, while the moon, stars, and

surrounding deep, seemed, as he thought, to unite their glories in contributing to his inexpressible joy. As he had never read the Scriptures on subjects of this character, or heard of such things before, he had no name to give it; yet fully satisfied of the fact that it was the Lord's doings, however marvelous. After walking his deck for sometime, wondering and adoring, he weighed anchor and made sail. Having a fair breeze, he soon arrived in Baltimore, just as the people were collecting for church. He fell in with the crowd, and entered for the first time a Methodist chapel. It being a love feast meeting, he sat and heard to his astonishment his own recent views and feelings related. It was not until now that he knew what all these things meant. He said to himself, "If these people are converted, so am I! If this is religion, I have found it also." We presume he might have adopted with the utmost propriety the language of the young man to whom Jesus gave sight, who said, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." Religion is the same among all nations. "He that is born of God hath the witness within himself." This was the happiest day this brother ever saw.

It is due to this good brother for me to say, that in my day he was numbered among our most efficient and active class-leaders. He devoted much time in visiting the poor

of his flock; searching out, and “strengthening the things which remained,” and were ready to die. Likewise he erected a convenient room for class and prayer meeting purposes, which was consecrated to that particular use. It became proverbial, “We will go up thither to worship; the Lord will convert or bless,” as the case might be, “at father Samson’s.” Was not this an Obededom? for the Lord truly blessed him.

CHAPTER X.

Conversion of my Twin Brother—Yellow Fever in Baltimore.

Is it not meet to make merry and rejoice at the return of prodigals? The succeeding Monday after my conversion brought the welcome news of my brother John’s return; who was given up for lost, but recently found; once dead, but now alive. He arrived in port on Saturday night. The next morning, hearing that Dr. Roberts was to preach at Howard’s Hill Market-House, he, with several of his ship-mates, went to this meeting, and unintentionally placed themselves almost within reach of the preacher. The press being great, they had to remain; when one of those arrows from the Magazine of truth, which flew thick and fast, through the hands of this

mighty man of God, penetrated his heart, and brought him to the ground. The Doctor continued to push the victory. When he saw this sailor struggling for life, he reached down from the butcher's block on which he stood, and took him by the hand, saying, "Young man, rise up, and tell what God has done for you." He arose, clothed in his right mind, and exhorted to admiration, carrying death into the enemy's ranks. It has been said that these sudden conversions rarely stand; but this was an exception, as will be seen in the sequel. He came to see me on the following Monday, and found me shut up in my room, conflicting with the enemy, who had returned with all his reinforcement, to repossess his former residence. This conflict lasted until the early part of the evening. While on our way to meeting, four in company, a stop was made, to wait for one who returned for something left. I being a little in advance, was caught away in the Spirit, like Philip; that is, my soul was filled with the Divine presence, lost in wonder, love, and praise. My first recollection was passing the threshold of the meeting-house door. Brother Nicholas Snethen was in the pulpit preaching, and to me he appeared like an angel. This was the happiest meeting I ever experienced, or perhaps ever shall, until mortality is swallowed up of life. These refreshings were well calculated to prepare

me for what was soon to follow. 'This twin brother and myself having regained our forfeited Eden, could now talk, feel, and rejoice together. These were happy days. But our summer was not to last all the year. The yellow fever broke out in the city in its most malignant form, and became highly contagious; sweeping off its scores, succeeded by hundreds and thousands. This retarded, and finally stopped our great revival. All that could possibly move, left the city; while those who remained were inadequate, both in number and disposition, to take care of the sick. As to funeral rites, they were entirely dispensed with. The dead were uniformly interred at night, by men appointed for that purpose, who carried them to the Potter's Field by wagon loads, at all hours of the night. The burying place resembled a plowed fallow, or a spaded garden. At the commencement of this scene of mortality, I obtained a fixed conviction, that at no distant period I must preach the gospel, the particulars of which will be stated hereafter. Believing then, as I do now, that under circumstances of this character, it is an indispensable part of a minister's duty to jeopard his own life, to aid his dying fellow men, I employed a large portion of my time in visiting the sick and dying, especially at nights. My employer, Mr. Ennis, who is entitled to my warmest regard, closed his business, and

gave me the balance of my time. It has always appeared surprisingly strange to me, that while infidel physicians, for the sake of honor and worldly gain, visit hospitals and poor-houses, palaces and prisons, that a minister of Christ should shrink from so plain and positive a duty, enjoined by Him that has said, "Forasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my disciples, ye have done it unto me." Permit me to say, I have nought to glory as touching this matter; I did no more than my imperious duty. It was very common, while our young men's prayer meeting continued, to have messages brought or sent, which were delivered in the most impressive manner, requesting us to come and pray with the sick and dying, afford aid, &c. The scenes of human suffering which I witnessed in different ranks of society, thought and pen are inadequate to describe. Whole families were visited by this scourge at the same time; some dead, and others dying in the same house, not unfrequently in the same room; tar, with other ingredients, burning almost to suffocation, especially after the black vomit commenced. This was a discharge of black mucus from the stomach, which was mingled with blood, resembling coffee grounds, or a decomposition of the liver, accompanied with the most offensive smell. Those apartments appeared like slaughter-houses. Much inconvenience, suf-

fering, and death, were consequent on the want of help, which was not to be obtained, especially among the poorer class of society. There were instances where even friends and relations refused their assistance; that is, in its most malignant stages, when if a person came within its atmosphere, he was almost sure to take it and die, in six, twelve, or at longest, twenty-four hours. I have known a few, who lived six or nine days; but these cases were rare, principally such as were removed to the country, or had special attention.

This was a time to try men's souls, if not bodies too. But who will fear, when he acts from a conviction of duty, relying on that promise, "Lo, I am with you alway?" &c. Hence duty and safety are, have been, and always will be, inseparably connected; and duty will remain duty, even if life must be sacrificed, which must be in certain cases; but it will be remunerated with life eternal, and all its consequent blessings. However, this is to be governed by motives in the benefactors. Will not these brands plucked out of the fire, hail such with "blessed," in the day of final retribution?

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CHAPTER XI.

Left Baltimore—Happy Death of my Twin Brother,

ABOUT this time our guardian brother, David, came down to the city with a view to rescue his younger brothers from this noisome pestilence. My brother John informed me he had consulted with Dr. Roberts, and was prepared to start, stating he felt it to be his duty. But it was through much persuasion that I obtained my own consent, as I thought my mission was not done in this region of the shadow of death; however, I yielded to their entreaties, and set sail the succeeding night. The vessel was in the charge of the hands, the Captain being absent, perhaps through fear of exposure at this critical time. We had doubled North Point, when we were overtaken by a violent head northeaster. My brother and myself having retired, when behold, we were turned out on the cabin floor with a crash; at which moment a messenger came pitching down the companion-way, calling for John to come to their assistance. He accordingly started in haste, took the command, and all was well. We arrived at our brother's landing on the second day, where we met with a cordial reception. What a change in these youths, since they left this affectionate family! But alas! death enters its pleasant apartments with us. The mon-

ster had fixed his iron grip on this apparently invulnerable young man. However, no symptom of disease appeared until evening, when the Baltimore plague presented its most malignant aspect. A physician was immediately sent for, Dr. Mitchell, of Elkton, who soon arrived, and commenced in the usual way, by bleeding and blistering, to effect depletion. Several eminent physicians, with united effort, joined in this dubious conflict, accompanied with the prayers and tears of solicitous friends. But every effort appeared unavailing. I started with all possible speed for Dr. Rush, of Philadelphia; but was stopped by sentinels, placed some ten miles from the city, who refused passages without an oath of being out of Baltimore fifteen days. With this I could not comply. I accordingly returned, and found that hopes of recovery were nearly abandoned. We were induced to resort to the last expedient, that of burying for a time in the fresh earth, having only a small avenue for breathing. On being removed to his bed, he appeared perfectly rational. As he had frequently, while in health, told me he was much harassed by the enemy, with fears that he should not hold out to the end, he said, "Brother Billy, I have proved the devil a liar for once;" and at the same time, manifested an ardent desire to depart and be with Christ, which he thought would be far better. This was a theme on which

he loved to dwell. He frequently anticipated meeting his mother, and numerous friends, in heaven. He remarked to me, "I think we shall not be separated long. We were born together, and converted about one time, and why not die together?" adding, "Do you not think you have this disease about you?" To which I replied, "I know not; but the will of the Lord be done." I remained with him day and night, and a happier being I never saw. He would clap his hands and praise the Lord, while the blisters would peel from his arms, followed with blood. He was at times deranged, which appeared to be his meeting hours, when he uniformly imagined himself to be at Howard's Hill Market-House, hearing Dr. Roberts preach. The hour of his departure at length arrived, when he called to me, "Brother William Swayze, come here. Invite them all to come in." On their approach he took them all by the hand, one after the other, and bid us an affectionate farewell. After a severe struggle with the unyielding monster, he turned his head, and called me by name a second time, and seizing my hand, said, "I am prepared—prepared—pre-p-a-red;" while, "Glory, glory," followed. The trembling sound died with nature's expiring effort. This victory was obtained through the blood of the Lamb. I will add the verse of a hymn which he frequently repeated during his illness:

“O happy, happy place,
Where saints and angels meet;
There we shall see each other's face,
And all our brethren greet.”

My reader will pardon me when I say, here was a finished model of nature's finest production, decorated with all the jewels of our holy religion.

CHAPTER XII.

Uniting with the Church—Utility of Church Membership.

As my departure from Baltimore was sudden and unexpected, I omitted a few things in reference to that place of my spiritual nativity, which duty and religious courtesy seem to require. I will therefore note them here.

I united myself to the Methodist Episcopal church, on Fell's Point, a few days after my conversion, under the pastoral charge of that eminent minister of Christ, Philip Bruce. There is one thing worthy of note on this occasion, which was the best definition, illustration, &c., of the great utility of church membership, I ever met with. It was as follows: There was a young mariner presented himself at the altar, with myself, for admission. He was an associate of mine. Brother Bruce, perceiving from his dress his

occupation, inquired what his object could be? "Are you going to quit the seas?" To which he replied, "No, sir, not at present. We shall sail on Tuesday for Liverpool. I have thought, sir, this matter over. I am well aware of the exposures and dangers of the sea, and have concluded, upon the whole, it is best for me to leave my name on shore, among God's people, that I may have an interest in their prayers." He was admitted. Some six or nine months after this, the said young man arose in a love feast, named the circumstance of his joining the church before he sailed; and added, that on the succeeding Sabbath, they were overtaken by one of the most violent storms he had ever experienced. All hope of deliverance was despaired of. He took his watch from his pocket, and it pointed twelve. It forcibly struck his mind, "This is Sabbath, and meeting hour. My brethren are now praying for me. I felt it, and all was a calm." It might be well for all such, who have their doubts in reference to uniting in church membership, to remember this young sailor. Circumstanced as they may be, either by sea or land, it is of infinite importance to have their names somewhere on shore, or otherwise, among God's people; and dismiss their notions, as the insinuations of the enemy, that they can serve God as well out of the church as in it, in direct violation of that never-to-be-forgotten injunction,

in reference to the holy eucharist, "Do this in remembrance of me." It not only gives them a special claim on the prayers of the church, but so legalizes and ratifies that claim, that whether the individual is known personally, or the peculiarities of his case, to his brethren or not, yet it gives him an interest, a claim, founded both on legal, as well as moral principles, according to Divine appointment. Consequently, this claim he could not have while in a disunited situation. However religion may now stand in that old emporium of Methodism, I am prepared to state, I saw it in its primeval beauty and simplicity; rising in majesty like the morning sun, pursuing its onward course. I conclude that revival, which has been so often succeeded by others, which ushered in the nineteenth century, is still in grateful recollection in that highly favored city. If her Elijahs are removed, we hope her Elishas have caught their mantles. It was at these altars that God first called me to take an active part in the great work of saving souls, which commenced immediately after my conversion, as already noticed. Then was introduced what I call my *Juvenile Mission*, which will occupy a considerable portion of the succeeding pages. However, I had not at the time the most distant idea of preaching the gospel. As this subject will occupy some considerable space, I will leave it for a succeeding

chapter; and close the present, with narrating a circumstance which transpired during my stay in this city. The circumstance, as referred to, was the following:

Our altar exercises were generally attended by a crowd. There happened to be a young naval officer present, belonging to the ship *Lein Surgent*, taken by Commodore Truxin, from the French, which was said to be a signal naval victory, who noticed me in my movements. The succeeding day I was employed in doing work on board said ship, then refitting for Algiers. He came walking with a quick step to the quarter-deck, and abruptly asked me, "Young man, what church do you belong to?" I replied, "To the Methodist, sir. Have you any objection?" "I saw you," said he, "last evening at the chapel. I am surprised; is it possible you will go among those Methodists, and thus throw yourself away," &c. Adding, "You Methodists talk about God, heaven, hell, and devil. I don't believe in any of these things. Will you tell me who the devil is?" I replied, "You are not more surprised with me, than I am with you, to hear a man of your cloth and appearance talk as you do. To answer your question—as to the devil, I profess no personal acquaintance with him; but from all I have read and heard about him, I conclude you must be a striking model of his majesty." He wheeled round in apparent rage, and saw

several sailors laughing at him. He struck one of them with the handle of his umbrella, and broke it. He troubled me no more. This learned me two things. 1. Never to be ashamed of the cause of Christ, and his church; but to be prompt and unyielding. 2. To treat men always according to character; a fool according to his folly. This inquisitive young officer, with all his crew, ship, and cargo, were lost at sea, shortly after, while on their passage to Algiers. We conclude his faith has undergone a change, and his inquiries fully realized.

To return—being separated from a friend to whom I had been united by a peculiarity in the kindred tie which eternity alone can fully explain, how consoling was that promise, “My grace shall be sufficient for thee.” Being now placed under some peculiarities, in-particular in reference to duty, &c., I undertook the finishing of our chapel at the head of Northeast, at the same time waiting the openings of Providence.

CHAPTER XIII.

Reflections on a Divine Call to the Gospel Ministry.

As I have offered a few thoughts in the preceding chapter on the subject of uniting in church membership, before I return to my

regular narration, I will give some of my early views, however now much strengthened by experience and observation, on the subject of a Divine call, as connected with the gospel ministry; which the sequel of this narrative will show, was a matter of great moment to me, in this early part of my ministry. This was a subject much agitated, and considered of vital importance, both to the individual as well as the church in general. Therefore it engrossed the attention, both of the ministry and membership of that day; it being no uncommon thing for our brethren to question the preachers on this subject, perhaps in turn to their questions in reference to the knowledge of sins forgiven. It was viewed as a crime of the greatest magnitude, for a man to intrude himself into the ministry without a Divine call, and that fully and satisfactorily tested. These sentiments were gathered from the apostles, Wesley, and others. From the latter as expressed in the interrogatives proposed at the time of ordination: "Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon you the office of the ministry?" &c. This awfully solemn question always purported to me, in view of connecting circumstances, far more weighty considerations than that of a common oath. I frequently asked myself the question, "Who is sufficient for these things?" It was said by an eminent coun-

selor at law, that oaths had greatly lost their binding influence by their commonness, or frequency. "Witnesses," said he, "now-a-days, think if they can come somewhere near the truth, guess a little, or as near as recollection serves, all is well." But alas! what a scene of crime, consequent upon these weighty responsibilities, will be developed in that great day to which all are referred. I have frequently put this question to myself, Have you sufficient evidence of your call to answer this question in the affirmative, fully, clearly, and unhesitatingly, in which light it will be received? Having read Mr. Wesley, the Preachers' Experience, and consulted with those of my brethren in the ministry whom I considered fully competent to give instruction on this weighty subject, I examined St. Paul with more close attention. In turning to 1 Corinthians, first and second chapters, to which I would refer all that wish light upon this subject, I thought I saw fully what was meant by a Divine call to the ministry; that the apostle speaks much on the subject of wisdom, as connected with the gospel ministry, and that of a peculiar character. He calls it the "wisdom of God," the "hidden wisdom of God," &c. By way of contradistinction, he speaks of the wisdom of men, the wisdom of the world, and the wisdom of princes. But upon the whole, he says, "My speech and my preaching was

not with enticing words of man's wisdom." But who will doubt that this apostle was not fully accomplished in the sciences or wisdom to which he refers, which he denominates the wisdom of men, or of this world? So it evidently appears from the apostle, that every minister of Christ must be divinely called, or moved by the Holy Ghost, as indispensable, to inspire this peculiar wisdom, for this special or particular purpose; for in his conclusion, he gives us to understand the design of God in so ordering and arranging this whole matter, that no flesh shall glory in his presence; that "he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." It therefore obviously appears, this divine unction, or Holy Ghost, or hidden wisdom, as the apostle calls it, is not to be dispensed with, while preaching the gospel remains as the instrumental cause of man's salvation. This view, in reference to the whole subject matter of the apostle's definition, in reference to this special or peculiar wisdom, for this special end or purpose, completely comports with Wesley on this subject; likewise in accordance with that well known passage, Proverbs, xxx, 11, "He that winneth souls is wise." That inspiration had, in this passage, reference to the gospel ministry, is admitted. And is it not equally obvious, that the wisdom St. Paul speaks of, as accompanying this divine call, is what is meant by

the prophet? and is it not equally plain, that Mr. Wesley means the same thing, where he treats on the subject of being moved by the Holy Ghost, and sent to save souls? This call is not a mere dictation or inward moving to duty, as in ordinary cases, but a special or peculiar unction, realized at the time when needed directly for that particular purpose; not as in the gift of tongues, which has long since ceased, but this accompanying unction, or *evidence*, is to continue always, even to the end of the *world*, directly during the existence of a gospel ministry.

The apostle tells us, that God, in his wisdom, had so appointed, or ordained, that through this medium the true excellence of this power, or wisdom, should be made known, that is, in the salvation of *souls*. Wherefore, he who presumes to preach the gospel without this divine call, intrudes himself into the *ministry*.

CHAPTER XIV.

The preceding subject continued—Plan of Studying Divinity.

IN viewing the apostle throughout, in both the chapters referred to, as clearly expressed and implied, together with Wesley, and the obvious meaning of the prophet, in the

passage last quoted, we arrive at this conclusion—that a *learned* ministry, and a wise one, are two distinct *things*. Facts in the history of the church, in all ages, go to prove this. I do not wish to be understood, in any thing I have said, or may say upon this subject, to disparage learning. 'The more learning the *better*, that is, if the individual is wise in the great work in which he is employed; but if his learning or wisdom be exclusive of any other kind than that referred to by the apostle, and expressed in the passage before us, he must and will infallibly fail of the end of his ministry. A want of success in a preacher in winning souls, goes to prove (1), he either was never called to preach, or (2) if he was called (and of course he knows his *duty*), yet he is too indolent or wicked to *do it*. 'The fair and legitimate conclusion, then, is, that those are the best educated *preachers* who win the most souls to *Christ*. He that winneth souls, that is multiplieth, *is wise*, which is the only safe and sure test, both to himself and the church, that he is called of *God*. However, there are cases where men are unsuccessful, and learned at the same time. It would argue a want of charity, to say they were all wicked, or intruders. There may be a defect with regard to their views on this subject, or otherwise such a want of common sense, as to defeat the great object

of their ministry. They may be pious, however, and suffer a great loss, yet "saved so as by fire." This is what is generally called revival preaching. So be it; then all preachers ought to be revival men; that is their preaching should be of such a character as to promote the great work of reform, directly to convert or win souls to Christ. It is said, "It is well enough to have some men to go about and promote revivals; but we want men to teach doctrines." Surprisingly strange! Is it not notorious, that revivals are calculated to doctrinate, that is if properly conducted, faster than any thing else? A preacher will never produce a genuine revival, if he does not teach doctrines to his hearers. This kind of preaching is full of doctrine; but it is doctrine to be practiced, which is revival preaching.

We introduce our text once more, "*He that winneth souls is wise*;" that is, if a preacher wins souls, he acts skillfully in adopting means and measures to accomplish the end. This is the proper exercise of wisdom, which is to be calculated as to its amount, according to the number of sinners he is the means of winning or saving. It would be indeed very strange, if a preacher did not exhibit some portion of truth, at sometime, in some way; so as to win one soul, or such a matter. I have heard this illustrated by the practice of physicians.

We say, then, any quack may now and then happen on some remarkable cure, and thereby get his name up; but the sober and more judicious, would judge of his skill by the uniformity of his success; that is, his general success in saving his patients. We call this common sense. It is a truth; and is it not just as true, with regard to success in winning or saving souls? Is not this a matter of fact—a divine truth—that he who *winneeth souls is wise*? We are not alone in our views with regard to these matters. I ask, is it to be wondered at, if we, of modern times, should exceedingly quake and tremble, on entering into a work that involves such fearful, *weighty responsibilities*, when we consider the feelings and views of our fathers, the prophets, Christ, and his apostles, on this momentous subject. Isaiah was one of those chosen vessels, and as such received and delivered messages from the Lord to the people. On one of those occasions, we hear him exclaim, “I am undone; woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips.” We hear the prophet Jeremiah, out of the bitterness of his soul, cry out, “I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me.” We presume causes for such feelings and sensations, were no more abundant at that day, than the present. We next hear the great Originator and Head of gospel missions, proclaiming, “The Spirit of the

Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed or called me to preach." We view him at the river Jordan, receiving his commission—we follow him, led as a captive into the wilderness, where a most violent conflict ensues, of forty days and nights continuance, and this immediately succeeded by another in the Holy City, followed by a third on the mountain summit, where a complete victory turned on the side of this mighty Conqueror. These things have their meaning and application. We next witness the precaution used in the appointment of Matthias to this office. We also notice the prayers, fastings, and visions of Peter and Cornelius. We behold Saul standing blind and trembling before Ananias, receiving his instruction; and when the question was fully settled, we hear him exclaim, "*Woe is me, if I preach not the gospel!*" It appears those called of God into the temple service, have ever had to bear burdens, subject to great mental labor, accompanied with feelings and sensations of the most acute nature. Such as have served in this capacity, have abundantly proven there is nothing enviable in this relation, above the life of the humble christian. Therefore, nothing but pure necessity, as connected with the salvation of the *soul*, ought ever to induce a man to take upon him the responsibilities of a *minister*. I will say to my junior brethren, who contem-

plate entering this important office, ponder, reflect, and consider well these matters. Let your evidence be full, clear, and abundant, in reference to your call, before you take a step, fraught with consequences, which you must meet in the day of final reckoning. I subjoin an extract from the late Bishop Asbury's favorite hymn—

“It's not a cause of small import,
The pastor's charge demands;
But what might fill an angel's heart—
It filled the Savior's hands.”

Who will think it strange to see the uniformity of sentiment that prevailed among the wise, good, and great in all ages of the world, on the subject of human salvation. Fallen nature has been fallen nature, and such, with regard to character, it still remains. Equally clear, and as fully understood, was the doctrine of the immutability of the Divine nature. As it was, so it is; and so it will continue. A change is indispensable somewhere, some how. We say the divine Savior has fully settled this question, putting it for ever at rest. We hear him repeatedly affirm, “Ye must be born again,” or never see the kingdom of God. This change must be wrought in the creature, as God cannot change. Revelation being abundant on this subject, is corroborated by reason, observation, and the experience of every man. Likeness will always associate

with likeness, where real enjoyment or true felicity exists.

I will now give a passing notice of what the gospel has to encounter in effecting this mighty change. Such, then, is the degeneracy of this once companion and participant in Eden's rare delights, we now see him wretched, degraded, and unhappy, not unfrequently miserable to the extreme; which is not confined to the lower or middle walks in life, but to be met with among all ranks and grades of society, from the savage wigwam, to the princely palace. We behold a most determined and fixed opposition to God and virtue, which is natural and irreconcilable. We see a kind of intestine war kept up between flesh and spirit, soul and body. Man arrayed against himself a war of extermination, in league with hell, an ally of the prince of darkness, unitedly aiming at one object, the butt and sport of their relentless fury, sharers in one common work—the destruction of the ever-feeling and never-dying soul. I have only to add, that man is opposed to his fellow in these matters. We see that the whole frame-work of society is throwing a most dire influence around him, from the cradle to the grave—an influence hostile to his best interests, spiritual and eternal. What a call, then, for an active ministry, such as our gospel system; which, to say the least, was the product of actual experiment,

as it has passed through several revisions, improved and fully tested in the hands of its *Divine Author*, which was perfected and made complete by that power which was received from on high, and will be perpetuated during the continuance of its operations, which the apostle emphatically calls the wisdom of God; that is, the product of divine wisdom. He calls it, also, the power of God, directly in reference to this special power, or divine unction. Thus we view this whole matter. Well may the apostle call it the gospel of Christ, (1), as he originated it; (2), he is still the principal active agent in all its successful operations; (3), the grand, efficient means, by which he is converting the world; and that he was not ashamed of it, for this noble consideration, because it is the power of God unto salvation.

With all due deference, I venture a thought, which goes to say, that if the doctrine and principles, advanced in the preceding, together with the present authorized, established course of preparation for the gospel ministry, as it now exists in the Methodist Episcopal church, be closely and perseveringly adhered to, she has got the best theological institution in the world, having the test of one hundred years unparalleled success, builded upon the foundation of prophets, Christ, and the apostles, possessing a

direct, full, and legitimate claim to the promise of Him who has said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

In *conclusion*, it is but due, for me to say, the writer, in reading sometime since a short lecture from our celebrated revivalist, Rev. Mr. Finney, in direct reference to the attendant fruits or accompanying evidences of this divine call, found his views were in perfect accordance with that of his own. He has, therefore, introduced one of his figures, and perhaps, in some few instances, his mode of expression. He thus duly acknowledges the favor.

CHAPTER XV.

Peculiar exercise about Preaching—Indulgence required.

It was a matter of doubt with me, whether my call was sufficiently tested, to venture fully out into the ministry, or whether I should not wait longer on exhortation. I therefore appointed one day in the week to fast and pray for this express purpose, being advised to select a passage of Scripture, without giving chapter and verse, as in the ordinary way of preaching. I accordingly read passages on my knees, in secret retirement, with a view to a better understanding

of the sacred Text. This kind of exhortation preaching gave rise to much conjecture among the critical. "He steals his text," said they; "he wants to be a preacher," &c. Several times I came near giving up entirely. My trials from this source were great. What care, indulgence, and tenderness ought to be exercised towards these trembling youths, under circumstances of so delicate a nature! "Better for that man, he had never been born, *who offends*," &c. I found many instructors, but not many fathers. The presiding elder, *Rev. J. Everett*, came into the neighborhood. I unexpectedly fell in with him at a neighbor's house. He introduced the subject of preaching to me, with which I was much confused, as it was the first time he ever spoke to me, but seemed to know all about me. He was a venerable looking man, of a noble and majestic appearance, the largest I ever beheld, who preached with great authority and energy. He directed me to inform the preacher in charge, the *Rev. J. Latermoss*, that it was his wish that I should be recommended to the ensuing quarterly meeting conference, for license to preach, with a request for me to meet him at said meeting, as he wanted me to travel Bristol circuit. *Dr. Chandler* being sick, had retired to Philadelphia. These injunctions were strange things to me, at that time. After leaving, I considered and re-

flected much on this subject, and concluded it was of too delicate a nature for me to meddle with. I accordingly neglected naming it to the preacher. I attended his meeting, where he reprimanded me for my disobedience, and spoke to the preacher himself on the subject, giving me special direction to meet him at Wilmington, in some two or three weeks. I left, under severe *trials*, doubting my call to preach, and almost the truth of Revelation. Satan thrust hard at me. I stopped, on my return, among non-professors, who were very kind. I retired at an early hour, honestly reflecting on the past, present, and future, and concluded to give up preaching—fell into a calm, composed sleep, when I had the following *extraordinary* dream: I thought I was on my return to resume my former occupation, and when within a short distance of the place of destination, found myself falling from my horse. While poising over to the right, I beheld a terrific monster with my left foot in his iron grasp, trying to unhorse me. I brought over my whip, and applied it with all my strength. After a violent contest, I succeeded in effecting my escape. I now fancied I awoke, and found it a dream, and concluded it was not worth minding. I next viewed myself in a large unoccupied room, looking through into a kitchen, in which I saw a large coil on the floor, of the serpent kind.

It struck me, that it was the same being that attacked me on the *road*, having changed his appearance, and was now sent to destroy me for *disobedience*, at which instant it made at me with a tremendous roar, its eyes apparently flashing fire. In a great fright, I made my escape. I now, in imagination, resumed my work in finishing the *meeting-house*, when I was called by a messenger, into an adjoining house, belonging to the *Rev. Wm. Hunter*. On entering, I felt myself falling—caught a chair—feeling a difficulty in my right knee. On examination, I found a black spot a little below the knee, about the size of a cent. It struck me forcibly, “That is a cancer inflicted upon you, for not *obeying* the call of *God*.” Shame and confusion seized me. I concluded I would cover it up, and accordingly replaced my pantaloons, and repaired to my work. I was called in a second time, and partly fell as before. On examination, I found my leg was half *gone*. I spoke to several that were present, and requested them to view a poor wretch, who must soon die and go to hell, for disobeying *God*. All appeared awful as the judgment day. I thought there was much weeping with the family, when my much esteemed mother in Israel, Mrs. H., said, “My young brother, I always thought God had called you to preach, but some thought you were too young.” I replied, “Ah, mother, I

knew my duty, and that was enough. Now you see the consequence of disobeying *God*. I will soon be cast into outer darkness." I then addressed father H., inquiring, "Do you know a cure for a cancer?" He replied, "he had learned one, but was afraid it was too late." I requested him to try the same. He accordingly took a knife and removed all the decayed flesh out of the wound; in doing which, he found a small piece of a *shaving*, got in at my *work*. I said, "That will witness against me in the day of judgment." He filled the wound with a mixture of oil and lard; when it struck me forcibly that Jesus Christ was in the adjoining room, although I saw him not; but said to him, "Now, Lord, if consistent with thy will, take my limb, spare my life, and I will obey thee." This promise was repeated three times, and I awoke, so confident of its reality, that I examined my limb immediately. My feelings, at this time, can be more easily imagined than described. A little previous to this time, while in retirement, I opened my Bible on Job, xxxiii, 14, 15, and 16: "For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumbering upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction." This went to give much additional weight to the above. In viewing Mr. Martindale, in

reference to this matter, he classes dreams under three heads: (1). natural; (2). divine; (3). diabolical and sinful. Dr. Clarke, in speaking of dreams, says, "Many, by such means, have had the most salutary warnings; and to deery all such, because there are many vain dreams, would be nearly as much wisdom as to deny the Bible, because there are many foolish books." We consider this all-sufficient. This extraordinary premonitory, as I received it, the shaving in the wound in particular, produced a lasting *impression*, as I was much attached to the business in which I was then employed.

CHAPTER XVI.

A continuance of my Inquiries in reference to Duty—
A Temptation from the World overcome—My Call
to Preach fully tested.

THE succeeding day, I returned, with a view to adjust my matters, and prepare for the contemplated circuit—called on my old friend, N. Crouch—opened my mind freely to this father in Israel—a man of respectable standing in the church, and of great moral worth. At the close of my remarks, he smiled, and said he had believed for some-time, that God had designed me for this work. He had received it in answer to

prayer. He talked to me like a father, pouring the oil and wine of consolation into my disconsolate bosom. My guardian, brother D., also gave me suitable advice, which was succeeded by similar from my brother-in-law, P. The first presented me with a horse, the latter with saddle, bridle, and portmanteau, enjoining, "Be faithful, and make a good use of them—wear them out in your Master's service." They have both gone to their *reward*. I started for Wilmington, to meet the presiding elder, according to his request; but he was not ready to give me a direct answer, until he saw Dr. Chandler, as he had heard his health was on the recovery, and might resume his labors. However pleasing the intelligence of the Doctor's recovery, I was placed in a delicate situation. I had closed my business, and prepared for traveling, in compliance with his wishes, and had rode some fifty miles to meet him, to accompany him to the circuit, without knowing of any of those contingencies. Of course I was left in perfect suspense, to wait his leisure for a letter, which, perhaps, would negative the whole. However, I passed it over, in reflecting, that old age has got its infirmities.

I now started for the Peninsula—traveled about fifty miles to see Rev. J. L., preacher in charge of Cecil circuit—a man of excellent preaching talents, pre-eminent for piety—now gone to his *reward*. I met him a short

distance from his house, dismounted from my horse, and we sat down together, when I related to him all my exercises in reference to these matters. I will venture to say, that if ever a Saul was directed to Ananias, I was directed to this holy man. He heard me with deep, prayerful attention; but made me no direct reply. We went to his house, and he took me into a private room, and kneeled down to prayer. When we arose, he requested me to go with him to a neighbor's house, where, by request, he was going to baptize a sick child. While traveling on a narrow path of logs flatted, through a black swamp, or quagmire, he turned and said, "Brother, by keeping this path, it will convey us to the house whither we are going; but if we turn to the right or left, we might possibly get there, but there would be a thousand chances to one if we ever reached the place of destination. I am fully satisfied," said he, "that God has called you to the *ministry*. Follow the openings of Providence, like this path, and you will be led to success and heaven; but if you turn to the right or left, you will get involved in difficulties," This was a timely premonition, as the sequel will show.

Some short time thereafter, I preached at a brother W.'s, in the state of Delaware. While preaching in the evening, a gentleman rode up in his carriage, and came into the

meeting, where the Lord laid hold on him, and he cried for mercy. This he continued for nearly the whole night, and obtained deliverance. He tarried with me the succeeding day. On the day following, I went home with him, and remained a short time. A few weeks thereafter, I attended another meeting in the same place, where he met me a second time, and tarried over night. The next morning he presented me a thoroughly digested plan, to put me in possession of a large estate. However, it was expected that I would preach as long as I lived, and apply the extra proceeds to religious and charitable purposes. This was the most powerful temptation, of a wordly nature, I ever met with. Perhaps the old Serpent thought he had me now completely in his coil; but brother L.'s black swamp was still in full view. I deferred an answer for further consideration. So it remained for some months, but finally extricated myself without giving offense. That important advice was at hand, "He entangleth not himself," &c., "so he may please Him who called him to be a *soldier*."

About these days, I had an appointment at a brother Uptigrove's, on the Sabbath. While on my way to this appointment, I entreated the Lord, in the most humble and devout manner, to give me *a soul*, as a seal to my ministry; which, if granted, should settle the question with regard to my *call*.

I arrived at the place, at the time appointed, but found none present but the family. It was supposed there was a mistake some way, some how. I started to get my horse; and while opening the stable door, I saw three persons approach the house. I thought to myself, that is the Scripture *number*—I must hold a meeting. I accordingly returned, and held meeting as usual. When advanced to near concluding *my talk*, there was a wicked, hardened young man, who stood near the fire, fell as though he was shot, and directly a second out of his chair. The wife of the latter appeared much alarmed, which I supposed resulted from fright. Here was two-thirds of my congregation (the family excepted), hopefully converted; which finally settled this momentous question with me *for ever*.

CHAPTER XVII.

Governor Bassett's Meeting in Dover, state of Delaware.

I WILL be pardoned, while I make another digression, which cannot come in the strict order of time; but the facts have their full claim to a place in this narrative.

The year succeeding my leaving *Baltimore*, our periodicals announced a great re-

ligious meeting in Dover, the capital of the state of Delaware, invited by the Hon. R. Bassett, governor of said state, who was among the early fruits of Methodism. The notice went to say that the pious of all denominations were invited, who should be provided for during the continuance of the meeting, which was protracted about a week, holden July, A. D., 1801. We consider it preparatory to camp meetings. It was held under the supervision of Messrs. J. Everett and J. Chambers, sen. The regulation and order of the meeting were excellent. The regular attendants were entertained in private dwellings. The Governor accommodated several hundreds, for the convenience of whom he had a house previously prepared for the exclusive purpose of lodging the male part of his boarders, with beds in its several departments. His elegant mansion supplied a dining-room and lodgings for the females. The spacious green, in front of his house, supplied the place of collecting before meeting hours, after breakfast, where they formed in regular procession. From thence they marched through the west part of town, perhaps half a mile, to the chapel, which, with its surrounding grove, furnished the place of worship. This meeting was attended by thousands, some even from the extremities of the great Peninsula. Worship generally continued through the

day, with a short intermission for dining. After the close of the evening service, which was at or about nine o'clock, the remaining mourners were conveyed to the private dwellings, where religious exercises were not unfrequently continued during the *night*. A person, to pass through the streets of this beautiful town, especially after their return from the place of worship, on each succeeding evening, would have supposed the millennial, or latter day glory of the church, had truly come. Praying and singing was heard in almost every dwelling.

One thing is truly worthy of remark: that was to see the Governor passing at the sides of his table, waiting upon his numerous guests, without distinction, frequently singing a verse of some appropriate hymn, which seemed to rekindle that sacred fire, with which his enraptured soul appeared so abundantly imbued. This meeting was succeeded by another the following year, which I also attended; and, it was thought, fully equaled the former. Such a *governor*, for genuine piety, with all the accompanying prerequisites to constitute the great, good, and useful man, both in church and state, perhaps, is without a *rival* in the history of *nations*. His body now rests a neighbor to his much esteemed Bishop Whatcoat, while their happy spirits are associated in a more congenial clime. The good done at this meeting, we

are prepared to say, was extensive; but its full amount will not be known until the gathering angels shall appear. I left the meeting with my spirit greatly refreshed with the wine of the kingdom. My commission being renewed, I was fully resolved to end my days in the blessed work of saving *souls*. I attended several meetings while on my return, where I met with the fruits of the Dover meeting. An occurrence, which transpired at one of those meetings, I will here notice. The meeting was in the after part of the day, on the succeeding Sabbath, at the house of a brother Moffat. Having arrived before the meeting hour, I walked a short distance from the house, when I met, in the road, a poor object, who attended our recent Dover meeting. He was a finished *lunatic*. It was supposed he had some sense of right and wrong—religiously disposed—prayed much, and always fighting the *devil*. His appearance was ghostly—a slender, meager person, with a haggard countenance—wore his beard long, his apparel poor, and illy adjusted. One thing was remarkable: he would uniformly place himself in front of the preacher, was still and quiet, whether sitting or standing; but whenever there was an apparent move in the congregation, or evident operations of the Holy Spirit, he would commence swearing and damning in the most spiteful and Satanic manner, at the same

time apparently resisting with all his power. This paroxysm lasted say three or four minutes, and then he would resume his former calm, composed appearance. He excited no disturbance in the above named meeting, as he was well known in that region. I being aware he was a stranger in this neighborhood, advised him to step in before the people gathered, and fix himself in a remote corner, which I designated. He promised he would. He said it was not himself that swore, but the wicked spirit that was in him; but he would *resist, pray, and remain quiet*. I also apprised him of the alarm it would make if he should break out in this place. The conclusion was, he broke out in the most demon-like manner. The congregation simultaneously sprang to their feet—wheeled to see from whence this awful language emanated, and saw this frightful being for the first time. Here was a scene of confusion. Perhaps many supposed their time had come. Truly “the wicked flee when no man *pursueth*.” A gentleman of respectability told me that he as much believed, at the time, that this prodigy was the devil, as he had an existence.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The results of several Quarterly Meetings—Extraordinaries attendant on Dr. Chandler's Preaching.

I WILL now notice some of the attendant occurrences of the following quarterly meetings, commencing with one held in the Beth-el chapel, under the supervision of the Rev. J. Everett—Dr. Chandler, circuit preacher—noted as the great revivalist of his day—pre-eminent in point of faith and energy—a man of great personal dignity, however at times a little eccentric. The Doctor preached on Saturday night. While preaching, there was a disturbance in the gallery, produced by a young naval officer, a Mr. M'D. The Doctor stopped, and showed the impropriety of his conduct. He desisted for the time being, but soon began again. The Doctor paused for a short time, raised his eyes towards heaven, and in the most solemn and impressive manner, said, "Young man, if there is mercy for you, you will repent and obtain it"—the precise time not recollected—"if not, I pronounce you dead and damned, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost!" These awful expressions produced a most thrilling sensation in the congregation. The young hero soon left the house. On his return, he picked up a Bible. Soon after, in company with two of his as-

sociates at a tavern, one of whom (being my informant), a Mr. Chapman, stated, that Mr. M'D. dashed said Bible into the fire, took the tongs in his hand to defend it, using the most blasphemous language; and with the tongs raised the cover, while lying on the coals, to let the fire through, when he saw and read this passage, in Ecclesiastes, xi, 9, "But know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." However, he persisted in burning the blessed Book. This was soon succeeded by riding into an old vacated church, when a companion of his, a Mr. R., ascended the pulpit, while M'D. remained on his horse, to hear his Satanic declamation. At the conclusion, he wheeled his beast, which sprang with great rapidity. His knee coming in contact with the door post, broke it in pieces. This wound soon terminated his earthly career. He died in the presence of my informant, in all the horrors of despair. He said language failed to describe the tragic scene. This produced, in the mind of my informant, the renunciation of his infidelity, and terminated in his happy conversion to God. Mr. C. and I calculated, at the time, that his end took place some few days short of the period fixed by the Doctor. He is gone to answer at that high tribunal referred to in the passage of his premonition.

While the Doctor is before us, I will re-

late another circumstance, which took place at a quarterly meeting, held in Thoroughfare Neck. The Doctor rising to close after the presiding elder had preached one of his usual pathetic discourses, commenced in his (not unfrequent) artless, simple style, with saying, "I will tell you a little story, or express a thought, or relate a circumstance, as the case may be." However, he evidently designed first to arrest the attention, and then proceed with an illustration of some of the prominent features of the sermon, winding up the whole with an application. He accordingly began his little story, by saying, "A certain old minister, in the course of his travels, happened upon an island, where he was taken sick, being brought nigh unto death. His kind hostess, supposing he needed nourishment, asked him to name something he could eat, and it should be provided. He stated 'he thought he could eat fish, if fresh.' A servant was immediately ordered to repair to the surrounding waters to procure a supply. The boy returned and stated to the madam, standing in the door, 'it was so tempestuous, he could not catch any.' The sick preacher heard this, spoke and said, 'Never mind, sister, the Lord will provide;' when, at that instant, a fish-hawk flew over, and let fall from his talons a fine live fish, in the door-yard. It was immediately secured, prepared, and presented; which afforded a

healthful repast for the sick brother." The Doctor then turned round to the presiding elder, and said, "Father Everett, do you not know something respecting this matter?" He replied, "Yes, brother; it happened on Kent Island, at the house of Gen. Kent. I am the man who ate the fish, and *recovered*." The Doctor stated "this was not a miracle, but next to it—a special Providence, to answer special purposes, in part depending on secondary causes. Whereas, a miracle is wrought by supernatural agency, without the intervention of such causes." His application was powerful. Here I found business in abundance, in gathering and laboring with the wounded.

The next and last of these quarterly meetings, I shall here name, which was held at Northeast, Md. The circumstance was as follows: A certain noted matron, the widow of the Rev. Mr. Couden, former minister of the Episcopal church, at this place, with her family, at that time resided on a farm near Elkton. It is due to this great protectress and supporter of early Methodism, to say, that this widowed lady, however far advanced in years, discovered evident marks of refinement, which were to be seen in her appearance, address, manners, family regulations, &c. The conversion of this interesting family to God and Methodism, was brought about in the following way. Her youngest

son, an amiable boy, near eight years old, came in from his plays, and said, "*Mother*, I want you to go to the quarterly meeting at Northeast, and take me; I want to see Dr. Chandler." The *mother* considered, at the time, his solicitude was the result of youthful curiosity. The next morning being the day said meeting was to commence, he renewed his entreaties, as he must see the Doctor. The family carriage was accordingly made ready, when the mother started with her solicitous son. On their arrival, the preaching had closed; however, a prayer meeting was in progress. The boy learning the Doctor was in the house, left the carriage and went in, climbed up on the back of a seat, and saw him in the altar. His mother remained in the carriage. Supposing his curiosity was fully satisfied, she called him into the carriage, and they returned. But it appeared there was something else wanting; however, he said nothing, manifesting great seriousness. The mother became much alarmed. She asked him if he was sick? He answered, "*No, ma.*" Tea being prepared, with much persuasion, he was prevailed on to enter the room, when he fell upon his knees and began to pray aloud for mercy. This produced much alarm with the brothers and sister, servants and all, who finally became the subjects of divine *grace*. How true it is, that "out of the mouth of babes and

sucklings, God has ordained praise!" On my first interview with this family, I found the "elect lady and her children, walking in the ways of truth. May they not lose those things which they have wrought; but receive a full *reward!*"

CHAPTER XIX.

My First Persecutions Commence.

THE days of my persecutions now arrive, which find me in the neighborhood of nineteen. I now took a more resolute stand against the evils of the day. Having made a recent excursion to the south, I came, in company with several friends, directly from a quarterly meeting, to the last designated house, where we held meeting in the evening. We closed, as usual, with a prayer meeting, having some mourners in our circle, among whom was a young woman, on a recent visit to see her friends, residing in the neighborhood. This girl was arrested and carried off by several of the sons of Belial. The succeeding morning I found my horse was missing, but was found some days thereafter. However, I spent most of this day in company, looking for my horse. Towards evening I took my bridle, and repaired to the house where our mourner was

conveyed the preceding night. Here I found her surrounded by a set of malignant persecutors. I was soon surrounded by the same crew, whose ranks were directly increased by some passing fox hunters. These took their stand at the door, it appeared with the view to prevent my escape. I soon discovered that evil was meditated. I learned afterwards they were waiting the arrival of the man of the house, who had made heavy threats against me, a message being dispatched for him. As night was on the approach, I concluded it was best for me to retire, if it were possible for me to effect my escape. During my tarry, I warned them of the evil of their ways. Feeling as though I had faithfully discharged my duty, I advanced towards the door, however, not manifesting any fears, with regard to a passage out; when one behind me spoke, saying, "You are going to leave without praying, are you?" This was evidently designed as a decoy, as they were waiting the arrival of Mr. S., to put matters in full operation. I replied to the above, "If I will pray, will you kneel?" It was answered, "I will." I knelt down and commenced praying, which produced considerable agitation. However, most of them knelt, some swearing, and others talking, producing the most discordant clamor I ever witnessed, no doubt designed to confuse and drown my voice. But an evident change

in feeling was soon realized. A profound silence directly prevailed among these clamorers. I never felt more drawn out in prayer. When I arose, my enemies had nearly all fled, the door was clear, and several of the inmates were crying for mercy, and asked my forgiveness. I stood a few minutes at the door, and gave my farewell address, and took my departure. When but a few rods from the house, the infuriated Stall arrived, well prepared to accomplish his threats on me. His ravings were within my hearing, but night excluded me from his vision. The result was the deliverance of this innocent girl, if no more. How true that saying is, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver," &c. This was succeeded by another escape from the mouth of the lion, which was supposed, in part, originated from the one above named. However, the ostensible cause appears to have been the conversion of a young man, and his union with the church; he being, at the time, an apprentice to his uncle, who manifested great opposition, and threw out some heavy threats against me. But his nephew being very solicitous for the salvation of his soul, and, perhaps, at the time, unsuspecting any evil results, requested me to call and have a talk with him on the subject of religion. I accordingly did, at a time we probably fixed on. On entering, through a narrow passage, a door stood

open to my right, which admitted me into a room, occupied, at the time, for a shop. Here was his uncle, with others; and on my approach, he wheeled round in an apparent rage. I at once discovered evil was intended, as preparations appeared made ready to hand. I stepped into the hall to leave, when I met with a heavy blow. It appeared aimed at my head, but hit my shoulder, and was repeated until it terminated in a complete malling; but I had no sense of pain, or inconvenience, after the first two or three strokes. I conclude that *Stephen's* death was not only happy but painless. That well known passage in Romans, xii, 19, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord," came with force to my mind. I had occasion to recite this passage, in giving my testimony before the court. He left me suddenly, and I retired, and met my appointment, at the lighting of the candle. I felt no particular pain from my wounds, until I had concluded the labors of the meeting, which was a time of refreshing. After dismissal, I took a young man in an upper chamber with me, when I made known, for the first time, what had taken place. My clothing being removed, he saw my body in a bruised condition. Suitable applications were made, and I suffered no special inconvenience. By and with the advice of my friends, a prosecution was commenced, which terminated in a

fine and costs, to a considerable amount. The admonition of the président judge to the defendant, was of more consequence to me, than all that occurred on the occasion. I was strongly urged to commence a suit for damages, which should cost me nothing, not even attendance at court; but I declined, supposing that the unfortunate man had suffered enough, whom I forgave, as I told him at the time, and could pray for him, which seemed to enkindle his rage. I thought it was possible that these scourgings were intended for my good, as I was a youth, greatly exposed to many evils consequent upon the peculiarities of my situation. Naturally fixed, determined, and persevering in my course, I needed perhaps all the correction and counsels administered to me, coming from any quarter. However, my moral character was sustained unimpeached. About this time I was strongly solicited by many of my good brethren, to give myself up to the conference, and enter the field of regular itinerancy. This matter they laid before the preachers. As their last quarterly meeting for the present year was past, they supposed it would answer every purpose, if the preacher in charge secured a majority of the names of the quarterly meeting conference, affixed to a recommendation, for admission, as if they were assembled in their conference capacity. This was accordingly attended

to. Thus my name was carried forward to the ensuing Philadelphia annual conference, which was preceded by one of a similar character from New Jersey, and set aside for the want of legality in the manner and time in which it was taken, it being decided that the Discipline was not met, inasmuch as they were not in their associated conference capacity. Of course, I failed, in company with my brother, who preceded me. For several important reasons, I consider this a correct decision.

CHAPTER XX.

First Annual Conference attended in Philadelphia.

By and with the advice of the preachers, I attended this conference, A. D., 1802. It being the first I ever attended, there was full employ for my eyes and ears. Bishops Asbury and Whatcoat occupied the chair alternately, while perfect order, peace, love and union prevailed among the preachers, highly characteristic of this city of brotherly love. Messrs. T. Lyelle, late chaplain to congress, and Dr. Roberts, of Baltimore, occupied the Fourth-street pulpit, two evenings in succession. The former deluged his congregation with showers of oratory, while the latter inundated them with floods of divinity.

What matter is it whether "Paul or Apollos, if Christ be at the foundation?" Such preaching was calculated to invigorate and elevate the mind, however shaded the past, as well as obscured my present ministerial performances. Was this pride, or pious emulation? I had two appointments to preach, one in the African church. These were among my best efforts; and what more could be required? With some exertion, I obtained admittance into the penitentiary, where I found access to these spirits in prison. They appeared pleased with my visit, whether good was done or not. My next visit was at the Franklin Hospital, accompanied by the Rev. N. Swing. This was a most splendid edifice; but what a scene of mental suffering was presented among the insane! These were persons of both sexes, principally from the middle and higher circles in life. They were provided with every facility to restore that money and art could afford; but a wounded spirit is hard to know, yet more difficult to heal. Perhaps there is no condition in life where gospel efforts are more unavailing. However, much instruction, in reference to both body and mind, may be obtained from visits of this kind. While our guide was conducting us through the main hall, our ears were stunned with the shrieks and rattling chains of a female, in one of the adjoining cells. We were told there could be

no admittance until supper time. Brother S. manifested a special desire to see this individual, and noticing a transom sash fixed on hinges, placed his foot on the door fastening, opened and looked in; when he was instantly accosted with, "Who are you?" Being evidently shocked with such an unexpected salutation, replied by asking the same question. The answer was, "Susan Pike. You are," said she, "Mr. Swing, a Methodist preacher." A rational conversation continued for some minutes, when he stepped down, manifesting great surprise. I then took his place; but her paroxysm being renewed, not a word could I elicit; but what a form did I behold—a perfect model of symmetry, destitute of the smallest tinge of the vernal rose, exhibiting more than the native whiteness of the morning lily. This face, we were told, had then been secluded from the sun for a matter of fourteen years. She was sewed in a piece of strong hemp cloth, and extended upon a mattress that lay upon the floor, with a chain attached to each ankle, which appeared not of sufficient length for her to stand erect. The sight was truly affecting. I stepped down, and we retired. The sequel of this was—she was the daughter of a highly respectable family, residing in Pennsylvania, considered the beauty and idol of her friends and associates. Much care had been taken in her education, accom-

plishments, &c.; but, alas! a mother's pride, and a father's ambition, with all the sweets of social society, must be abandoned for ever at the shrine of bigotry's unrighteous demands. Brother S. stated, which was corroborated by the conversation between them, that Susan, with others of her associates, came to hear him preach, when she was awakened to see the need of a Savior. On her return, she was told this was all a delusion—probably these men were false prophets, deceivers, &c. Much pains were taken to instruct her in the peculiarities of the doctrine of particular election and reprobation. She unfortunately embraced the latter, which ultimately terminated all her earthly prospects, and doomed her to this most of all wretched states of exile.

By special invitation from a Lieutenant Thomas, I spent an hour or two with him on board the frigate Chesapeake, whom I found to be a very interesting young man. He had obtained religion soon after his entry on board of this frigate—had but recently returned from a long cruise on the Mediterranean. He gave me many interesting anecdotes, connected with a seaman's life; but especially of his excursions in the neighborhood of ancient Palestine. He presented me with what appeared like a piece of Stucco plaster, of a yellow, smooth, fine texture. He said he took it from some ancient ruins;

and that he had good authority for saying that Christ and his apostles had visited this building, in its day. I kept this little relic for sometime. He informed me, that he had kept up his religious duties, and met with no difficulty in serving God, during his voyage. It was said that this young man composed that admirable little song, denominated the Christian Soldier.

“A soldier, Lord, thou hast me made—
Thou art my Captain, King, and Head;
And under thee I still will fight
The fight of faith, all in thy sight.”

I seemed highly honored. This visit was directly succeeded by another, in company with some six or eight preachers. We were invited to dine with the Rev. R. Allen, late bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal church. This was among the most splendid tables I ever sat at. Our host, instead of seating himself at the table, served as one of the waiters. With the exception of his color, he presented perhaps as dignified an appearance as any gentleman in the city. It was then said his property amounted to one hundred thousand pounds; and this was obtained by honest industry, after the prime of life had been spent as a slave. He purchased his freedom, and that of his wife, by his own labor. This being effected, he came to this city, when his whole property amounted to one solitary sixpence, as he informed me.

I name one more circumstance that was a subject of remark among the preachers, in their social circle, which had recently transpired. It so happened, that two Right Honorables, one late Gov. B., a Methodist, and the other late Plenipotentiary, a deist, made a short excursion in a pleasure boat, when they were suddenly overtaken by a violent storm of wind, which instantly laid their deckless vessel on its beam ends. The latter commenced praying with great earnestness, while the former commenced praising in joyful acclamations. "Ah," said Mr. B., "your work is now to be done, but mine is done, glory," &c. (These gentlemen were both brought safe to land.) How important it is for men not to delay a work of such moment until the fatal hour overtakes them.

CHAPTER XXI.

A Visit to New Jersey—Violent attack by Affliction—
A Conjurer Defeated.

HAVING made my retrograde excursions, to gather up some things, which must otherwise have been passed by, I now return to my regular course; consequently, to the dwelling of my much esteemed friend Latermoss. He proposed to me, to continue with him on

his circuit, until information was received from the presiding elder, when he would arrange matters with him. He could not consent to my declining the itinerancy. Perhaps one reach of his bridge had been removed, but might be replaced in due time. I accordingly started with him around his circuit, preaching alternately, and enjoying his invaluable society, instructions, &c. When we arrived at the northwest part, I found my brother Amos prepared to visit his friends in New Jersey, for the last time, as he and brother D. were preparing for a remove to Ohio. He pressed me hard to accompany him. I accordingly did, as matters were now on a train to enter the field of itinerancy, on my return. By and with the consent of my Ananias, I started to see an aged father, but not to bury him. This was in accordance with that well known and uniform advice of the venerable Bishop Asbury, in his charge to the young preachers, "See well to your parents—honor your father and mother," &c. Notwithstanding this was a Jonah's desertion to me, I regarded it as a paramount duty at the time; yet we say "circumstances alter cases." This was an important time, when viewed in connection with the peculiarities of my situation. We took a northern direction, and arrived at Easton, on the Delaware. We tarried for the night at an inn; but the ensuing morning

found me a very sick man. My brother conveyed me over the river, to Jersey, to the house of the Hon. Mr. Bidleman, an old acquaintance of ours. They were members of the Dutch Reformed church. My disease was of the nervous kind; of course, at times, attended with derangement, which soon discovered who I was and what I was. However, contrary to the calculation of my brother, it rather increased than diminished their never-to-be-forgotten kindness. The old adversary, after failing, in the first attempt, to keep me back from the work of the ministry, now, serpent-like, shifted his ground, or form, and tempted me to believe that, although God had called me to preach, yet in consequence of my late removal, he had cast me off for ever. My affliction, consequent upon the nature of the disease, had a direct bearing upon the mind. I frequently called aloud for "water to cool my tongue; for here," said I, "I am tormented in this flame." It not unfrequently took two men to keep me on the bed. My bodily afflictions were great; but my mental sufferings were still more intolerable. A noted conjurer, of Easton, hearing of my situation, called to see me; perhaps to work a miracle. But it must be accomplished alone. He requested all present to retire, and approached, laying his hands upon my head. I looked him in the face, and said, "You are the

devil, begone instantly, for I will have none of your conjuring about me." He darted down stairs, and informed the company that he could do nothing, as I was possessed of the devil. How true it is that Satan is subject to disappointments. On the ensuing day, it was reported that a Methodist preacher was in town, and would preach in the evening. This produced almost as much surprise as if one of the old prophets had arisen. He was sent for by Mrs. Bidleman. He informed me that he was on his way from the Canadas to conference—a brother Brandon. He tarried with me during the day, and strove to convince me there was no unpardonable sin. At the request of the family, the congregation were brought into my chamber. He took his stand near my bed, and it was said preached to admiration, on, "*This is a faithful saying,*" &c. I told my brother, that I intended to give this people a warning, after brother B. was done; but becoming lost in a kind of mental absence, on recovering from which, to my astonishment, the congregation and the family had retired. I commenced, although entreated by my brother to desist. I awaked some of the family, who, on entering my room, fell and cried for mercy. If I had been in health, what an opportunity to do good! Truly this field was "white, and all ready to harvest." An uncle of mine, D. Hunt, with

his daughter Mary, arrived with a convenient carriage, bed, &c., to carry me to his house, about ten miles distant. I am induced to think that the reception and treatment of Messrs. Bidleman and Hunt's families to me, will be duly remembered in that day, when it will be said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me."—Matt., xxv, 40.

CHAPTER XXII.

Removal to Asbury—Extraordinary Deliverance from Affliction.

ALL things being made ready, we took our departure, accompanied by one of Mr. Bidleman's daughters. I soon found myself situated in that pleasant village of Asbury, surrounded by my friends and relations, with a grand-mother, nearly ninety years of age, sitting by my side, fanning me. But what are fine parlors, physicians, and friends to a person in full view of the retributions of eternity? This move brought on a relapse. My pains, distress, &c., were beyond description. Not unfrequently I passed through the house. Latches, together with the resistance of my watchers, were but small obstructions during these paroxysms. Once,

in particular, I was determined to plunge myself into the kitchen fire. This was prevented by dashing water upon it. It appeared as though the adversary was making his last effort to destroy me. Being carried back to my room, it required two men to confine me to my bed, to prevent me from injuring myself. At one of those times, I imagined myself sent to summon the world to judgment; when I commenced calling aloud, "Arise ye dead, and come to judgment." Those awful sentences of the poet were as never before portrayed to my distracted imagination, accompanied with a full conviction of their then present reality—

"Above, around, beneath, amazement all,
Terror and glory, joined in their extremes—
Our God in grandeur, and the world on fire!"

which was continued for sometime, until it alarmed the village, and brought a crowd around me, when I commenced exhorting them to repentance. A gay young lady cried for mercy, and retired behind her father. This and the succeeding night will never be forgotten. Restoration was entirely despaired of, by friends and physicians, as I was informed. Probably on the second morning, when my departure was looked for every moment, while fully composed in mind, there appeared to me a narrow passage was opened up through the blue vault of heaven, about

the breadth of a man, to the abode of the redeemed, lined on both sides with angels, arrayed in glittering attire, while the blessed Redeemer stood at their head, and beckoned me to come. I was filled with unutterable joy. My friends, who supposed I was dying, at the time, were weeping around me; and my aunt, being overcome, was carried into another apartment. I was sensible of all that passed, but felt no disposition to speak for sometime. The first words I uttered were, "I am, if possible, glorified; God has healed me, soul and body; be not alarmed, I shall not die now, but recover, and spend my life in calling sinners to repentance." Soon after, I requested something to eat; and by the aid of a friend, took my seat at the table, for the first time during six weeks or more. Unbelief, says all this (without discrimination) was the strength of imagination. I admit the former part was—however, it appeared real to me at the time—but the latter was real. Can a man know when he is relieved from pain of body? does he know the difference between sickness and health? Wherefore does he know all this? Because he feels it; thus it becomes a self-evident fact. Therefore, as far as feelings are concerned, which is an operation of the mind, so far it was real, and no further. I remained in this place for several weeks, among my friends, to recover strength—in which time

I gave myself to reading, study, and prayer. I also more fully determined on my future course of operation; that was, that my primary, or leading object, should be to save souls, or get sinners converted, any way, any where, as prudence and propriety might dictate, carefully watching the openings of Providence, to go into such parts and places where my labors were most needed. The circuits being extensively large, and laborers were few, the appointments, of course, were few in number, and far between; while a vast extent of territory, not unfrequently containing a dense population, included within their bounds, unoccupied, or visited by our preachers. In view of this state of things, I concluded to devote no more of my time at my trade, than might be strictly necessary to procure clothing, meet contingencies, &c., when and where it could be done most conducive to accomplish the great primary object of saving souls; so that all might be done to the glory of God, and the advancement of his cause. I thought, at the time, this plan of operation would answer an excellent purpose, as I could visit neighborhoods, where a man in the character of a Methodist preacher, would not be received, as many had imbibed the idea that they were dangerous men, going about breaking up churches, &c. I found much could be done in visiting and fireside preaching, if properly

timed. Family talks, in reference to practical duties, as connected with the responsibilities of man, was all-important. These were subjects rarely understood, and much opposed in those days. It seemed next to impossible to convince the sinner, that he had something to do, as touching the conversion of his soul. I frequently found it necessary to present him with some kind of test, to demonstrate and establish the truth of this doctrine. Sometimes this was effected by entering into covenant, to pray in secret, for a given period. Another method was by taking the names of such as would commence to seek religion, on what was called the roll (not a class paper). This was formed of slips of paper, cut lengthwise, with the sheet attached at the ends, of sufficient width to write a name, which could be rolled up or unrolled at leisure. One of these kind of rolls is now in my possession, containing upwards of two hundred names. These I carried with me, and presented them to my brethren as subjects of prayer. It not only answered a good purpose, as a starting point to the individual, especially when inviting to the mourners' bench was impracticable, but familiarized their names and persons to myself; so that I could know them, and inquire after them. I have obtained from five to fifty names at a meeting; but would take wherever I could obtain them, in public as

well as private, in the parlor, shop, or field. This I considered well adapted to my age and times.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Visit to Readingtown—Extraordinary Meeting.

HAVING recovered my strength so as to render it practicable and safe, I left Asbury, and went to Readingtown—called on an uncle of mine, A. Kinney, where I met with a cordial reception—enjoyed the society of my aged grand-mother, who was a zealous Methodist. This neighborhood possessed many local advantages, while religious institutions were but few and small. A small Methodist society, and that very low in religion, constituted what might be considered their righteous few. An appointment was made for me at brother P. Egbert's, for Sabbath. Truly I came to this place in much weakness, fear, and trembling. However, I felt my commission, recently renewed, with a firm reliance on the promises of God. I tarried on Saturday night with a venerable father N. Egbert, class-leader. At the breakfast table, in the morning, I named to him, that I had seen, in a dream last night, at a meeting somewhere, seven mourners forward for prayers, one a black person. Our good

old patriarch smiled, and said, "I wish, brother, it may come to pass to-day;" and so it ended, as a dream told. We soon repaired to the meeting, where I commenced and preached as usual, in my plain, simple way. So it was in the class-room, that seven mourners presented themselves for prayers, and one was a black woman, who, it was said, came some five or six miles. After visiting some places in this region, holding night and day meetings, as time, place, and circumstances would best justify, preaching and exhorting, as the case might be, endeavoring to keep in view the great primary object, as connected with every class of missionary operations, I left New Jersey, and returned to the south, aiming to go where I could do the most good, and to tarry no longer in a place than prospects of this character would justify. However, privations and oppositions of various kinds were to be met with everywhere. But cold looks, and cold hearts are the greatest and most painful afflictions that a minister of Christ ever met with. In passing through some sections of the Peninsula, in the neighborhood of marshes, on the waters of the Delaware and Chesapeake, I took the fever and ague, with which many parts of this country abounded. This disease made a heavy attack upon my iron constitution. I broke it by my pulpit and altar sweats; but re-attacks were not un-

frequent. I took a tour to the north, through Pennsylvania, where I recovered my health, in a degree; but being somewhat partial to the south, I returned rather too soon, when I met with a re-attack, which terminated in a kind of dumb, or third day ague. It being late in the fall, I disposed of my horse, and took a vessel at the head of the Chesapeake, and sailed to Baltimore. I am now passing over perhaps one of the greatest fish ponds in North America, its northern tributaries being abundant, and well adapted for their deposits, protection, and preservation of their young, especially north of the Persusia island, which furnishes the best and greatest variety, suited to the several seasons of the year. Here they were taken in abundance. Neither was it behind, in reference to its fowl. The swan and goose were numerous, with various kind of ducks: such as canvass-back, and red-head, which are considered superior, for eating, to all the feathered tribe. These were, at that time, to be obtained with ease, and that in abundance. We arrived in the city, after some two or three days. I found my old friends, that were alive, in health, peace, and quietness. My health being in a delicate state, I kept within doors nearly all the time. On this visit a circumstance occurred, that I record, which may be classed with those numerous instances of men's trifling with feelings, good desires,

&c. The name of this individual is not now recollected, if proper to insert; but it is presumable there are some now living on the Point, that recollect the circumstance. He attended a Sabbath evening meeting in what was then called the new meeting-house. At the close of the sermon, as usual, mourners were invited to the altar. This gentleman was standing somewhere near, looking on. He being an unbeliever at the time, and much opposed to this kind of exercise, felt much resentment in his own mind; but the impression forcibly struck him, "Seek the Lord while he may be found—now, or never." He spurned at stooping to such a detestable practice, as beneath his honor. However, the conviction was impressed with increasing weight; that is, *now*, or *never*. He being afraid, as he stated, that his feelings would get the ascendancy over his judgment, stepped back in the aisle by degrees, until it became involuntary, when he found himself standing in the door, where he remained a short time, considering whether it was best to return to the altar, and give up. He found his feelings were gaining strength, while it was reiterating, "Seek the Lord while he may be found. This is the last call." "I will not," said he, turned round and left the door. It being a dark, rainy night, he groped his way until within a short distance of his door, when a light, similar

to a flash of lightning, surrounded him, affording light sufficient to have picked a cambric needle from the pavement, as he stated, at which instant it was announced, "Let him alone, he is joined to his idols." "I knew then," said he, "that my destiny was sealed. O, that I had yielded and given up last evening, at the meeting-house; but now it is too late." I saw him the succeeding day, in the street, where I obtained the above, in substance, from him, and others, perhaps better acquainted with all the particulars, as I was on the point of leaving. What was the final result of this business, I cannot positively say; but I am inclined to think his end was premature. It is likewise presumed, that he, like many, had passed that point in his history, from which there is no return. The greatest confidence has always been placed in the closing assertions of men possessed of good moral character, especially when no personal interest could govern such assertions but a responsibility which fixes the future destiny of the individual. There is no question those persons of ancient and modern times, whose sins appear to have gone before them to judgment, are thus made examples, for trifling with sacred things; while the testimony of that unfortunate individual, of whom the Savior speaks as engulfed in the burning pool, has returned to show those that are living careless and impenitent, what

awaits them beyond the tomb, least, with him, they wake up in the midst of tormenting flames.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A Visit to Perry Hall—Bishop Asbury's Success in Preaching—A Nobleman's Conversion.

DISCOVERING no prospect of the recovery of my health, by continuing in the city, I went a few miles north, in the neighborhood of Perry Hall, noted as the country seat of a Mr. H. Goff. I tarried a short time with a brother Brown and son. The kindness of this family to me will never be forgotten. I had an introduction to Mr. Goff, in whom I found a substantial friend. He invited me to take up my abode with him for a season, stating he would afford me every facility for the recovery of my health, and as far as circumstances would admit he should expect I would officiate at the family altar, hold meetings, &c. I could have access to his library—read and study, as it might suit my convenience—have a horse to ride when I desired—with a servant, as might be needed; but what was of more especial advantage, was that source of information derived from the conversation and instruction I received from that great and wise man, during our

evening sittings; at which time he related many instructive anecdotes, which occurred during his tarry in Europe. His lady and daughter, who constituted the inmates of his house, were, during my stay, principally in the city, especially through the winter season. This gave me repeated opportunities of conversing with him alone. At this time, he gave me his history, from his childhood, his being called to London, &c., which, according to my best recollection, was as follows:

He was the son of a respectable planter of Baltimore county. Having been named after an uncle in England, he was, by request, at an early age, conveyed to his friend, who adopted him, and made him his heir to an immense estate. Perhaps this heirship was legalized by an act of parliament, when his surname was altered to that of Goff. I am inclined to believe, at the same time, he was raised to the rank of nobility. Having completed his education, suited to his rank, his uncle dying about the same time, and his prepossessions being strong in favor of his native America, he returned, bringing his fortune with him, in money and other valuables. He landed in Baltimore sometime previous to the American Revolution. I am inclined to think his marriage was consummated prior to his final return to America. However, his lady, an American, was in company at the time of his landing, accord-

ing to his statement. It appeared the first night was spent in a hotel, near the place of landing. Having made these statements, he then approached his christian experience, which I have, for distinction's sake, denominated "the nobleman's experience." It is short. I will, therefore, insert it. In the after part of the day, in which he landed, a messenger approached the door of his hotel, and announced that "Bishop Asbury will preach to-night at the chapel." He inquired, "Who is Bishop Asbury?" "A countryman of yours," was the reply, "now bishop of the Methodist Episcopal church." He said to one of his company, "Let us go and hear him." At this time he was inclined to infidelity, having read Voltaire, Hume, and others. On their arrival at the chapel, he found it filled to overflowing; however, he pressed his way in, and stood in the aisle, in full view of the speaker, whose eye caught him. This was in the Bishop's prime of life, when his personal appearance and oratorical powers were strong and captivating. His attention was so arrested, that he knew not whether he was sitting or standing. However, such was his irresistible reasoning in favor of christianity, in opposition to his favorite creed, he arrived to this conclusion, "If you are right, I am wrong;" and so he left, returned to his lodging, and informed Mrs. Goff where he had been, what he had

seen and heard, stating, "*If* I should hear him again, I do not know but he would make a Methodist of me." His amiable companion replied, "Go and hear him, and I will go with you." They accordingly went on the succeeding Sabbath, when his "if" was removed out of the way. "You are right, and I am wrong." Both of them ultimately succeeded in obtaining religion, and joined the Methodist Episcopal church. However, I have recently learned, that he died in communion with the Church of England. But Mrs. Goff and her amiable daughter, since Mrs. Carroll, continued highly esteemed, and died much lamented by their Baltimorean brethren. It is but just for me to say, that this family, at that day, was proverbial for their liberality to the poor. Their house was always the preachers' home. I will be indulged to add, that after he experienced religion, he set his slaves free, as he informed me, submitting to their choice whether to remain with him or not, as best suited their convenience; but their freedom was recorded in legal form. The most of them remained on his premises. These, with their descendants, constituted a considerable portion of our chapel worshipers. It was truly animating and profitable, to witness the times of refreshing we had at the family altar, especially in the evenings, if old master was present, who not unfrequently took

a part: when the blacks, if disposed, would finish with their pathetic prayers and singing, as if inspired with seraphic fires. These prayers and singing seemed as if purposely designed to load good massa and massa, as expressed, with their most spontaneous blessings. On one of those occasions, I distinctly recollect, this truly noble-souled man, who was then sitting by, turned and said to me, "Am I not as happy a man as ever you saw? Why, is not this rendering to servant that which is just and equal?"

CHAPTER XXV.

Preaching of Bishop Whatcoat—Description of Perry Hall—Exy as own Punisher.

THE Bishops, Asbury and Whatcoat, arrived. Perhaps more welcome guests never entered this mansion. After preaching to us, and with a short visit, Mr. Godd and I accompanied them to what was then called the Ficks Meeting-House, on Gunpowder, where Bishop Whatcoat preached one of his heavenly discourses, with all the sweetness of his well known temperamental of mind. I will here name another providential escape. About this time, I preached in the Perry Hall chapel, on Sabbath, when a Mr. C., who resided some few miles distant, was

present, whose character I had previously learned. His wickedness consisted, principally, in his brutal, savage treatment to his slaves, accompanied with intemperance. I beheld this thing in the congregation, perhaps for the first time. I accordingly offered a few thoughts in reference to the slaves; but said nothing about slavery in the abstract. This gentleman, therefore, applied it all to himself, and left in a rage. I returned home with my old friend B. and family, but calculating to return, as usual, for evening prayer meeting. My offended friend, it appears, was apprised of this, prepared himself with a gun, and waylaid me (which he afterwards confessed); but fortunately I carried with brother B. during the night. However, about sunrise, on the ensuing morning, he rode up to the gate, some ten rods from the door where I lodged. I heard my name announced, as he called to the kitchen girl, and inquired if I was there. She informed me that I was wanted by some one, but did not say by whom. Brother B. heard him call, and saw him out of his chamber window, sitting on his horse, with a gun partly concealed upon the opposite side. I had but just started from the door, when I looked up and saw the man preparing to fix his aim, but was obstructed by the family that surrounded me. Brother B. advanced towards him, when he wheeled his horse,

apparently in a rage, and rode off. This soon came to the ears of Mr. Goff's overseer, who immediately went to see him, and informed him what the consequences would be on the return of Mr. Goff—advised him to settle it as soon as possible. He accordingly came; and a humbler mortal, apparently, I never saw. He acknowledged his wickedness, and hoped I would forgive him—he would agree to any proposal I would make, as he knew his crime would put him to the wheelbarrow, and said he deserved no better, &c. I kept him in suspense for a time, and then stated I forgave him. He was greatly alarmed at the idea of its becoming public. I told him if it did he would be the one that would first divulge it. Certainly “the way of the transgressor is hard.” I pitied the poor creature; and on the condition of a promise of reformation, I conceded to his ardent wishes, and here the matter ended.

Before I leave this region, I will offer a passing remark in reference to our admirable Perry Hall, which was situated north of the city some twelve miles, on an elevation near the center of a large, highly cultivated farm. The main building was of brick, two story, with a basement—fronting north and south, with porticoes front and rear—two small buildings, connected at each end, well proportioned, in size and height, square roofed,

and terminating in cupolas, with spires—the one on the east end finished above the basement into a beautiful small chapel, with a bell, directly for family accommodations. On the east, extending a little north, furnished the garden, which was large and commodious, having a wall of stone on the north side, and east end, of sufficient height to repel the cold bleeting storms, while the sun and southern breeze had free circulation. At the east termination of the main alley was the gardener's well constructed cottage, with a glass or hot room connected with it. A little north of the west end of the main alley, stood a building of corresponding appearance. This garden produced fruits, vegetables and flowers of the most rare and luxuriant character, adapted to the different seasons of the year. Would it be extravagant to say this was a terrestrial paradise? West of the main building, was the coach house and such other buildings of convenience and taste, suitably distanced, with a spacious lawn and shrubbery in front of the main buildings. The whole finished a complete landscape, presenting a most romantic and splendid appearance.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Charity Exemplified—Useful Instruction concluded—
A Visit from the Dead to the Living not permitted.

As the time of my departure from this earthly mansion is at hand, and it would be natural for my reader to inquire what was gained by this Perry Hall expedition? I answer (1), health, with the extermination of the ague from the bones; (2); a knowledge of what all human greatness amounts to; (3), that a man may be wise, great, and opulent, possessing riches in abundance, accompanied with all the conveniences and luxuries of life, having his men servants and maid servants, and yet be a follower of Jesus Christ; notwithstanding, "how hardly shall a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven."

Why is it not correct for me to state, that a portion of my time was spent in visiting the poor, the afflicted, and destitute, by the express direction of my kind host, as there were many of this class in the adjoining neighborhood? I will add, that on my return from visits of this kind, brother G. would inquire, with all the solicitude of a father after his children, who they were? and how they were circumstanced? what was wanting? &c. As inquiries of this kind were imposed on me, at the time of leaving, I usually, on the succeeding day, accompa-

nied with a servant and modes of conveyance, returned (sometimes accompanied with the donor) with their much needed supplies. Neither were the poorer Methodist preachers forgotten in these earlier times of need. I was credibly informed, that our philanthropist would have whole suits of clothing made up, and conveyed to the conference; where, in parts or whole, as most needed, they were presented to these pioneers of early Methodism. It is also due to say, his pious companion was not behind in these acts of munificence. May it not be said to all the rich, "Go thou and do likewise?" (4). It also afforded me the best school of practical theology I ever enjoyed. This six months' visit is now to close. The morning before I left, I visited among my colored brethren, prayed with, &c. After a short excursion through neighboring orchards, viewing the pastures of selected flocks and herds, I returned to the mansion. There, in company with my special friend, took a walk for the last time through this garden of delights. On our return, while ascending the portico, he commenced as follows: "William, you are young, and know not what awaits you. You may be a poor or a rich man. You have to meet, with others, the vicissitudes of fortune; but let these matters turn as they may, whether situated among friends or enemies, here or there,

sick or well, hold fast your religion; for I tell you I have proved these things effectually, from a planter's boy up to riches, wealth, and what the world calls greatness; but I declare I never found real, substantial pleasure or enjoyment until I found the religion of Christ." Here I looked him in the face, and beheld the gushing tear. He added, "I would rather be the poorest African in this world, and have the love of God in my soul, than to possess all I do, and be destitute of it." And so we parted to meet no more in time.

Before I leave, I will add, while enjoying one of those evening sittings, brother G. gave me the following, which I will here narrate. Some few years previous, he invited home with him a certain brother Cannaday, a suppurannuated, or broken down preacher, at the time far advanced in the pulmonary consumption. Perhaps there was no place that he could have been more welcome, or better accommodated. It was said he was a man of great moral and ministerial worth; but like many of his cotemporaries, fell a martyr to excessive toilings, exposures, &c., not unfrequently realized by those early pioneers of Methodism. A little previous to his death, brother G. being present in his room, asked him what he thought of departed spirits appearing to the living? whether he believed in such things? After a few moments apparent

deep reflection and prayer, he replied, "I have never seen any thing of the kind; but we should suppose there had been such things, which is inferable from what the Savior said to his disciples, when he appeared to them after his resurrection, they manifesting great signs of fear at his presence, supposing they had seen a spirit. He reproved their incredulity, saying, 'Behold my hands and feet, that it is I myself—handle me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.' " What a judicious reply was this! Brother G. added, "Brother, will you, if consistent with the Divine will, appear to me?" To this he made no direct reply, but assumed a most devout, praying attitude, which continued for some minutes; and then replied, "I will." The time and place for this interview they fixed upon, which was to be on the third night after his interment, in the same room where they then were. Perhaps the succeeding day, he requested brother G. and family to come in, when he gave them his valedictory, taking his most affectionate leave of them, and died in holy triumph. Their previous arrangements were accordingly attended to. On the third night brother G. entered this lonely apartment, and spent sometime on his knees in prayer, by the side of the bedstead from which he had been removed, but saw nothing, neither did he ever see any thing

of the kind. Is this a fair test of the principle?

CHAPTER XXVII.

A Visit to Abington—Several Extraordinary Conversions.

AFTER some side excursions, I arrived in Abington on Sabbath morning, in a violent storm of rain and sleet. This village was sometimes called Cokesbury, which name, perhaps, it would always have retained, if its splendid edifice, the college, had not been consumed by fire. It was named after its founder, Dr. Coke, then bishop of the Methodist Episcopal church. Although some years had elapsed, yet a moral gloom appeared to rest on the place. The church was greatly reduced by deaths, removals, &c. I called on a father Weskey, the only remaining trustee of the college, a man of great moral worth. Soon after my arrival, a young brother G. Day, perhaps the only young man in the church at the time, now acting clerk for his uncle, Mr. Billingsly, ardently solicited me for an appointment to preach in the evening. I conceded to his wishes, and the meeting was accordingly announced. I therefore preached to an attentive congregation, on, "Prepare to meet

thy God." I returned with my friend W., and tarried all night. The succeeding morning, while at the breakfast table, our young brother D. came in and warmly solicited another appointment for the succeeding evening, stating he had discovered an uncommon seriousness with some of our evening hearers—he thought much good might be done, &c. I replied, "Brother, if you will bring me the names of five, who will promise to set out to seek religion, and show themselves, &c., I will tarry." He started out and returned in haste, for fear I would be gone, and found us at the table, stating he had got four names, but soon obtained the fifth. The meeting was accordingly given out, to be where I then was. We had a large room filled with attentive hearers, to whom I expatiated on, "Quench not the Spirit." While applying the subject, an interesting looking young man rose up in a remote corner of the room, and advanced forward to where I stood; said nothing, but knelt down at my chair, in apparent great distress. This singular, unheard of move, produced a tumult in the congregation. I stopped, read over my five names, and invited them forward, four of whom presented themselves. The great wonder was, this young man, who first came, had not been previously conversed with on the subject, whose name I had not, had never seen an example of the kind, and

withal was both deaf and dumb, said to be a noted dancer, and much respected among his associates.) The inquiry would naturally be, What induced him to come forward in this way? I presume he never saw the like before. Schools of instruction, for this class of men, were not in existence at that day. There was no special excitement in the congregation. He sat on a back seat, in a dark corner—he heard nothing that I said, if he saw me. (Let infidelity account for this, to the exclusion of Divine influence. A more distressed mourner I never prayed with. I was not apprised of his situation, until I commenced talking to him.) He continued sometime on his knees, manifesting the greatest anguish of spirit, evidently engaged in mental prayer; when all of a sudden he sprang to his feet, exhibiting a countenance indicative of joy inexpressible, and full of glory. His shining face appeared to dart fire through the congregation, which seemed to environ it in a kind of sacred halo. (His hands were all activity, making signs over this astonished people, which, with the expressions of his countenance, seemed to tell the wondrous story of redeeming grace and dying love.) We closed our meeting with renewing our appointment for the succeeding evening. The next morning I called to see brother D., who informed me the enemy was much disturbed last even-

ing—two men in particular, an Esquire P., and a certain coach-maker. The former was a man of the first respectability in that place; however, he had taken great offense at the noise, and left, much displeased. The latter had threatened my life, and was considered a dangerous person. I had better be on my guard in passing the streets, &c. The Squire had recently been in the store, and inquired if I had left town, and retired. He could not say what he wanted, but he presented a sad countenance. I invited brother D. to accompany me to his house, which he accordingly did, and he introduced me to his lady. She said her husband would be in, in a few minutes—who soon arrived. He stepped forward and took me by the hand, saying, “Sir, I have an acknowledgment to make to you for the way I left your meeting last evening. While the dumb man was making his signs, a strange feeling came over me. I at once became enraged at you, returned to my house, and walked my room, until a late hour; and then retired, fell asleep, and dreamed I was carried to an exceeding high precipice; while leaning over the edge, I was ready to fall into a hideous cavern, with destruction in full view. (At this instant, you, sir, sprang and seized me, and thus prevented my fall.” I replied, “Hold fast,” as he had me by the hand, “and I will try to prevent your destruction.”)

He cried out for mercy, which, it is to be hoped, he obtained. I spent the balance of the day in visiting. I called into the coach-maker's shop, and found this hardened monster at his work, standing at his bench, when he turned an eye that darted vengeance. I now, for the first time, considered my danger. I spoke to him with all the mildness possible, invited him to my evening meeting, but not a word could I elicit from him, bid farewell, and left. I saw him in the congregation while preaching. At the conclusion of the sermon, I requested all those that wished, or desired religion, to tarry for prayers. (I discovered he left with the crowd. We collected the mourners, and labored with them. Our laborers were weak and few, in those days, which made it hard for the preacher; "but as your day is, so shall your strength be.") After our prayer meeting had progressed sometime, I noticed the latch of the door rattled. I approached and raised the latch, when the door opened with considerable force, and a man fell his whole length, prostrate upon his face. The candle being brought, we beheld the coach-maker. "Forgive me, forgive me," was his cry; "I had murder in my heart; I was resolved to kill you," said he. "It was with the utmost resistance I kept my hands off the adz, which lay on the bench, to accomplish the deed; but after you left, I began to

think, what harm has this man done me? how kindly he spoke, when he invited me to meeting," &c. We prayed with him nearly the whole night, when God had mercy on him. Is not this "abounding grace to the chief of sinners?" Who need despair? Our meetings continued in this place, with increasing interest, preaching and praying with mourners for many succeeding nights. The fruits of these meetings extending into adjoining neighborhoods, I had calls to go here and there in abundance.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Preaching in the vicinity of Abington—Deliverance from a Mob.

I ACCORDINGLY went to a father Swarth's, whose family had shared in our Abington revival. In this family, I found a welcome home, in which dwelling I held many profitable meetings. One I will here notice. A large room was filled, principally (with the exception of the family), with non-professors. There was a fixed attention to what was said; when suddenly, as if by a shock of electricity, I beheld my whole audience prostrate, lying across, between, and under the seats, in every direction, with the exception of one man, who sat, say, on the second

seat opposite where I stood. My feelings, at this time, were indescribable. All was still as the house of death. How long I had stood in this death-like silence, I cannot say; however, I involuntarily advanced towards my lonely stranger, when he reached out both hands, and said, "Keep your distance, keep your distance, if you wish to pray for me." I immediately stepped back and waited the result. How long before they began to come to their former state, I cannot say, but I should judge half an hour; when there was presented a variety of exercises, such as weeping, rejoicing, praying, &c. But a larger proportion manifested a kind of sullen sadness, and left the room without uttering a word. This will only have its parallel at some of our extraordinary camp meetings. Are not these "*signs following?*" Persecution now began to rage high. A Jezebel came into the neighborhood, and reported she had seen me, somewhere in the south, arraigned before a court for stealing a horse. This was kept from me for sometime, however, known to my brethren, who did not inform me, lest it should hurt my feelings. They knew it would not gain credence, it coming from an infamous character. As a prudential measure, I provided several to stand on the alert, and find out to whom she had said it. But all of no avail, it being evaded by saying she saw a man that looked

like me, &c. As she attended all my evening meetings, I took occasion to expose her (directly to herself); when, in some of my remarks, the poor creature fell, as if she was shot through the heart, in the crowd—was carried out, and troubled us no more. But it was not so with her associates. This club of ruffians made arrangements to destroy me; which, it appears, was to have been accomplished indirectly through a decoy, as the sequel will show. An invitation was forwarded to me to preach in a secluded, I should say wretched neighborhood; the most so, perhaps, in this whole region—among barren hills and lonely vales, truly the retreats of abominations. It was stated to me, if success should attend, it would break up this rallying ground of the enemy. I conceded to the wishes of my friends, taking two good brethren, father and son, with me. When we approached the margin of an old fenceless field, I discovered the meeting place; which was in a wretched hovel looking house, situated in a hollow. I proposed leaving our horses among the shrub bushes of this barren opening. It was acceded to. We arrived to what I religiously believe was Satan's seat. If I should say there was not a sober man in the congregation, the two who accompanied me excepted, I believe I should speak the truth. Not a sign of a bench, or seat, in the house, to be seen; but

all confusion, crowded, pressed together in a standing posture. It was lighted with two or three candles attached to the sides of the house. I placed myself near the door, elevated a little, on I know not what, and commenced without singing, made a short prayer, and finished my talk with little ceremony; for I felt as though I was on forbidden ground. When I closed, I discovered, nearly opposite, my two friends, to whom I beckoned, and stepped out of the door; at which instant, I was invited to step aside, by one of this motley crew; but supposed it was a friend, until his breath and swollen tongue betrayed him. I returned back, and found my company was gone, I supposed in pursuit of me. I saw no more of them until I arrived at their house, the night being very dark. I started with all possible speed towards my horse, concluding I should overtake my company. When I drew near, the first I knew I was surrounded by a band of ruffians, armed with clubs. From some expressions I judged them to be Romans, as their first salutation was, "You are a heretic, say your prayers, for we will lanch you into hell." I concluded my history was here to wind up. I accordingly raised my eyes, heart, and soul, to God in prayer; not for deliverance—this I supposed impossible—but to receive my spirit; at which instant that never-to-be-forgotten closing sentence of the Savior, came

with power to my mind: "Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."—Matt., xxviii, 20. That moment I heard the sound of horses feet, as on full speed. The next was the rush of two men at my back. They appeared on either side. The one on my right said, "The first man that touches this stranger, I will blow him through." I think the other said, "I will knock him down." They pulled me backward out of the crowd. We left them confounded and filled with dismay. Not a word or move was discovered. I was on my horse, and off, before I knew who were my deliverers. These best of friends, Messrs. M'Comises, not professors, informed me they had run their horses about five miles. Having heard of the plot, they prepared and started with all possible dispatch. May I meet them both where the wicked cease from troubling! How true it is, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver!" &c.

Another Providential interference, but more pleasing, I will relate, which transpired a little before I left the hills of Hartford county. My information, in part, was from a brother who attended my meeting on the succeeding Sabbath. He stated he had called, on the preceding day, to see an old friend, far advanced in the dropsy, given over by physicians and friends, confined to his chair day and night, reclining on pillows

fixed on a table. In this condition he had remained for sometime, waiting for his change. The afflicted man manifested to this brother a considerable solicitude to see the strange preacher he had heard of preaching in the neighborhood of Abington. "Is he gone?" was the inquiry. His friend replied he presumed he had. "I dreamed last night," said he, "this preacher came to see me, and brought Mr. G. D. with him. I thought the preacher was a doctor. He laid his hand upon my head, when my leg bursted, and the water spouted out across the room. Mr. D. spoke and said, 'This must be stopped, or he is a dead man,' when the preacher replied, 'Never mind, brother, I will stop it when I come.' " As I was unexpectedly detained until this Sabbath, being five or six miles from where the sick man lived, my informant being present, as well as brother D., who offered to accompany me, we went, with several of the brethren in company, to visit this friend. On our approach, he appeared not a little rejoiced. I said nothing respecting what I had heard. I, with my company, prayed with him. I admonished him to be also ready; and so we left. Just before my leaving this section of country, I was credibly informed the sick man was getting well; that the Tuesday after our departure, he walked a mile and a half, to visit his brother-in-law. We pre-

sume not to think or say, that this was a miracle, but a special Providence. I now leave this region, and direct my course to Haver de Grass. There is no opening here for men of my business. A gentleman informed me they had not one hypocrite in town, their characters were so notorious. I crossed the Susquehanna, and called on my old friend Dempsey.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Profanity Punished—Gospel Labors Needed.

I TAKE the liberty to say, that this whole country—that is to say, from Baltimore to the head of Northeast, which is the northern extremity of the Chesapeake, including necks, points, peninsulas, and islands, westwardly and northwardly, affording a rich soil, with a dense population of wealthy inhabitants—presented a great moral waste, destitute of vital piety, with the exception of a few small scattering societies. This was the aspect as late as 1803. Our revivals, at that day, appeared like seed sown in autumn, with a few attendant fertilizing showers, but soon succeeded by bleeting storms, and winter frosts; that on the return of spring, it appeared like a fresh plowed fallow, with but here and there spots or signs that the seed had taken firm

root. Therefore, the plow has been re-entered again and again, until we see a fruitful field, clothed with standing and living verdure. I formerly visited this neighborhood to see a brother who is now no more. At a visit, soon after my conversion, I found the whole neighborhood in an uproar, occasioned by what I call a special manifestation of retributive justice; which was as follows: A certain Mr. G. G., a respectable planter, however, absent from home at the time of the catastrophe—gone with his lady on a visit to Baltimore, leaving their mansion in the care of a Mr. W., a young man, a boarder at the time. It is presumed the same day of their departure, a gentleman and two ladies arrived, perhaps relations, to visit their friends; but finding they were absent, remained until the ensuing day. Mr. W. called in the overseer's wife, to keep company with those ladies during the afternoon. The two young gentlemen were out at this moment, when the neighboring lady, Mrs. F., gave her company a very minute description of the religious exercises of their blacks, which had recently appeared, in particular that of her kitchen girl. These things were quite novel in those parts at that day—perhaps as much so as christianity itself. But our much elated actress appeared not to be fully satisfied with her lucid descriptions, but must act it out in comedian style. She accordingly

knelt down and prayed, showing signs of great distress—fell over, remaining for a time apparently senseless—then sprang to her feet, elevating and clapping her hands, crying, “Glory.” After repeating this a second time, she presented a distortion of countenance, which caused her highly elated admirers to cry aloud for help, when Mr. W., with his friend, ran in and aided in laying her lifeless body on the bed. “Better,” said the Savior, “for that man he had never been born, than to offend one of the least of these,” &c. Mr. W., who witnessed this awful manifestation, was fully convinced of the truth of Revelation, of which he had previously doubted. A more distressed, despairing sinner I never saw, when he gave me the above particulars. I exhorted him to pray, seek, and hope for mercy; which he finally obtained, but not until despair had gorged her raven appetite on this hardy son of infidelity. Brother Wappleton, I have been told, is still living, sustaining the relation of a local preacher. May he be successful in warning sinners to flee the wrath to come!

After a short stay, I left this land of moral enchantment, and meandered my course, visiting my old friends—found death had made its ravages, and many had removed to what was then considered remote—Fort Pitt, Kentucky, Ohio, &c. I passed through Wilmington and Philadelphia, with their

intermediate villages, with but short tarries. City pulpits felt and looked too high for the boy at that day. I proceeded until I arrived at Hopewell, in the neighborhood of Trenton. Here I met with kind friends, and found a favorable chance of recruiting my resources, doing good, &c. I accordingly remained for a season; but the latter was not superabundant.

CHAPTER XXX.

Native Eloquence—"Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's."

SOON after my arrival, I visited Trenton, put up at a brother Eley's, a primitive Methodist family, an appointment being made for me to preach on Sabbath, the succeeding day. I was happily relieved from bearing the much dreaded cross, by an unexpected visit of that natural orator, well known by the name of Black, or Asbury's Harry—not his slave, but traveling companion. His distinguished successors would go to say he was highly honored. Moral and intellectual greatness is not always to be determined from outward appearances. Gold may be found and made to shine, though its native surface may appear very rude and unpromising. It might be said Harry was

black, but comely, of the middling size, delicately featured. In this he showed much of his African ancestry; however, marred in his visage, and quite diminutive in his personal appearance. He discovered a soul highly charged with immortality's enkindling fires, especially when treating on the sufferings of Christ. His language was good, manly, and dignified. His voice was excellent, energetic, and captivating, which was to be seen at once in the close and fixed attention of his hearers—his countenance brightening with a kind of pious enthusiasm, the legitimate attendant of genuine pulpit eloquence. His manner was bold, yet unassuming—gestures natural, unaffected, and graceful. His text, on this occasion, was, "Create in me a clean heart, O, God, and renew a right spirit within me."—Psalm, li, 10. This Psalm, with several others, I read to him a few minutes before we left for the chapel. He was perfectly ignorant of letters, as he informed me; notwithstanding, he was mighty in the Scriptures, and by no means destitute of such additional acquirements as would go far to accomplish the evangelical gospel minister. Neither was he without seals to his ministry. I was informed, by good authority, that a gentleman of the city of Hudson, of high respectability, in point of learning, a professed deist, on hearing him preach, was convinced of

his lost estate, and happily converted from the error of his *ways*. He usually followed the Bishop with a sermon (on Sabbath), and that at his most popular appointments, one of which is well recollected, in Parks' Woods, New Jersey. After the Bishop had closed, he called him up into the wagon, to conclude, in the gaze of an astonished multitude. After giving a passing view over his numerous audience, he raised his eyes and uttered the following: "Look not to the creature, but look to the *Creator*." This produced a thrilling sensation. At the above interview, he, with great meekness, observed to me, "If I can only have it said, after my departure, by my surviving friends, 'Black Harry is dead, but has left a satisfactory evidence of his happy exit, and final acceptance,' I wish to leave no better legacy behind me." May I be indulged to serve as one of his administrators in this? (Harry, like others, made a blunder in the former part of his life, but happily recovered, and died in good standing in the church, rejoicing in full prospect of a blessed immortality. The purport of this information I obtained in a notice of his death, published in a Philadelphia periodical, a short time after this interview.) The horse he then rode was a present from Bishop Asbury. He was then advanced in years, holding a kind of superannuated relation. However, his appoint-

ments were never more than mere nominal by the Bishop; to this purport: "Harry, I leave you under the care and direction of brother S., presiding elder, this year." The Bishop's rapid and extensive travels, proved too severe for Harry's feeble constitution; he therefore had to desist, sometime before his death. There appears to be a striking resemblance, at least between some of the circumstances, as connected with the services rendered by Harry to Bishop Asbury, and those of Onesimus to St. Paul; but with this exception, Harry was not a runaway slave, claimed as the property of another; but he labored with, and served Asbury as a free man. However, the Bishop (like St. Paul, perhaps) had been the procuring cause of his *freedom*, as the apostle was that of Onesimus. What service Onesimus rendered the Apostle, he does not explicitly state; but we should infer they were connected with the ministry, as he represents him as an intimate—"a son, brother, beloved," &c.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Extraordinary Dream—Visit to my Father's—Conflict between Duty and Inclination.

I VISITED, about this time, the penitentiary in Jersey, where I was politely indulged in

preaching to the convicts, who gave me an attentive hearing. Perhaps this was as wise a congregation as we often meet with; to whom I expatiated on, "Turn ye to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope," &c.—Zach., ix, 12. My best success with this class of men was in their private cells. Visiting prisons, I have ever considered a ministerial duty, of primary importance, especially those under the sentence of death. In several instances I have known genuine conversion, and triumphant exits of this class of persons. "I was in prison, and ye came unto me."—Matt., xxv, 26. I returned to Hopewell, and resumed my former domestic employment. I found my mind too much taken up with old mammon. How easy a matter it is to become entangled with the affairs of this world! Perhaps the following was designed as premonitory. A little previous to my leaving this place, I dreamed I was placed on an island, which appeared like an immense uncultivated forest. I penetrated to its center, where I saw a large vessel in building, braced upon the stocks. With much exertion, I ascended to its upper deck, where, with profound surprise, I advanced towards its bow. On my approach, an aged, venerable man presented. His head, or hair, was white as snow, hanging in ringlets on his shoulders, with a countenance impressively solemn. It struck me forcibly, this is old

Noah, of whom I have read and heard so much. However, not a word was spoken between us. He turned and advanced towards the stern of the ship. I followed him as though impelled by some law of enchantment; when he passed down a kind of companion-way, into a large commodious cabin, beautifully fitted up for the accommodation of passengers. I seated myself on a kind of locker, on the opposite side. At this instant there appeared, apparently between us, a form, exhibiting features, which language fails to describe, clad in a white flowing robe, that seemed exquisitely glittering. This angel (for such it appeared to be) said to Noah, "Calk and pitch your ark, for in three days you must start;" then turned and said to me, "Young man, go and warn all you meet with, to get on board within three days, or they will lose their passage." I awoke; but not without the most lively sense of this commission. The moral of this appears to have been—the island is the world, the forest is the uncultivated state of society, the ark was Christ, and with hard toiling I had got on board myself—perhaps this referred to my own conversion—the angel's address was the renewal of my commission, to go forth and warn sinners to flee the wrath to come—to get on board of this ark without delay.) The succeeding evening I had an appointment to preach at a brother

(F.'s. I said nothing respecting this dream, and thought I should not; but after my congregation was dismissed, it came with irresistible force; when I remarked to the people, as they were advancing towards the door, if they would tarry for a moment, I would relate a recent occurrence, which might be of importance to some of them. After giving the above in substance, when I came to the angel's direction to warn all to get on board of the ark, and that without delay, as it might be now or never with some of them, or lose their passage, &c., there were several that cried out for mercy, near the door; which, we hope, was obtained, and thus secured a safe passage.)

I left, and directed my course northwardly, to near what is called the Water Gap, in the Blue Mountain. This phenomenon in nature, we have noticed in the preceding. Here I met with my aged father, residing with his daughter, having recently lost his second wife, who, I am happy to state, died having hope in her death. This I heard from a brother preacher, and others, who visited her about the closing scene. My father was then at the advanced age of seventy, appeared to possess the vivacity and activity of former years, bustling and scuffling with the world, yet religiously disposed. He manifested no objections to my religious or ministerial course, with the ex-

ception of traveling. He presented me with some strong incentives, to settle down and preach for them, in a neighboring village, where they were entirely destitute—the proprietor of which, a Mr. D., offered to be forthcoming for a salary of three hundred dollars per year. My father, at the same time, would add a present of land in the neighborhood. This occasioned some thoughts.

“The fondness of a creature’s love,
How strong it strikes the sense!”

I add, this was my *father*. A most severe contest ensued, between duty and inclination. Duty said, “Go;” when inclination put in its plea, “Stay, young man, with your father and friends.” However flattering present prospects seemed then to appear, the future was involved in gloom, especially when I reflected on the past. After making this matter a subject of earnest prayer, I determined in my mind to leave. Having made suitable arrangements, I accordingly started about the dawn of day; and for reasons, I then thought admissible, I kept this from my friends, as there was no legal or moral obligation violated. Having previously disposed of my horse, I picked up my portmanteau on my arm, and directed my course eastwardly, preaching that men should repent, until I arrived at Newburgh, on the Hudson river. This day I witnessed the great eclipse of the

sun—perhaps not surpassed since the scenes of Calvary. At this day, Newburgh was a modern Sodom. Infidelity appeared to reign predominant. There were, however, a few righteous, who, perhaps, kept it from sinking. I put up at a brother Cole's, similarly situated to that of a Lot, whose pious soul and peaceful dwelling were much annoyed by this wicked people. He informed me, that it was not uncommon to have his house stoned on meeting nights. It was sometimes the case, that a large portion of the congregation would rise up in a mass, in time of preaching, and retire in a tumultuous manner. I concluded I would try them for once. Accordingly, there was an appointment made. The people passing through a hall, entered a door, into the meeting room. From a previous arrangement of the seats, I took my stand against the door, without the least suspicion. The candle stand, with myself, I considered a sufficient barricade. Toward the close of my sermon, from certain moves, I discovered the former practice of leaving was contemplated, from a kind of simultaneous rising up and looking at the door, when I was bearing down upon the sinner, portraying character and consequences. I brought forward the death-bed scenes of several noted infidels—among others that of M'D. burning the Bible. When this was presented, a young man, of respectable ap-

pearance, started to his feet, appearing as if in full view of the retributions of the judgment; when a violent scream was uttered by a woman, "Lord have mercy on my wicked son!" It was said the young man had recently burnt a Bible. The prayer of this mother, with the application, produced an awful sensation in the congregation. After a faithful discharge of what I considered an imperious duty, we cleared the way, opened the door, and let them disperse; but no stoning of the house succeeded.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Reply of a Culprit to his Judge—First Camp Meeting I attended.

THE notice of a camp meeting in our eastern world, was announced, to be holden in Sharon, Conn.—perhaps the first ever held in New England. I accordingly shaped my course thitherward, and arrived at Poughkeepsie, the county seat of Dutchess. Here the votaries and fruits of gospel piety were but faint and few. I put up at a brother Dumcomb's, the pilgrim's home. A circumstance that had recently transpired at one of their courts of justice, about these days, was the topic of much conversation. I will name it, as it is illustrative of that old Anti-

nomian notion, so warmly advocated in earlier times, directly in reference to crimes committed after the renewing of the soul; that is, that a man could be both a saint and a sinner at one and the same time. This was warmly contended for, and made subservient to the doctrine of unconditional perseverance. A certain judge, in his official address, previous to pronouncing sentence on a trembling culprit, standing before him, asked the question, "How is it, sir, that you, a professor of religion, yea, a minister, could commit such a crime?" The unfortunate man modestly replied, "I did not do it, sir; it was sin that dwelt in me; that is, in my flesh." He then more fully explained himself, and said, "It was the old man that did it, not the new man." But what said the judicious judge?—"Old man or new man, it makes no difference—there is no separation here—they must both go to the state prison together." If these distinctions and evasions between sins and sinners, acts and actors, cannot pass in a court of justice here, how will they pass before that tribunal, from which there is no appeal? when they must take up their abode in that gloomy prison, where, to its unhappy inmates, reprieves are not known.

I pursued onward, to attend a camp meeting, for the first time. Perhaps the inquiries after John the Baptist, were not more solic-

itous, when it was said, "What went ye out into the wilderness to see?" &c. On my arrival, the meeting was in progress. It appeared truly primitive. A large company of plain, impressively devout worshipers, assembled in the woods, dwelling in tents and tabernacles, of whom the world was not worthy. Their tenting was plain, and quite temporary; however, their fixtures were not owing, in all cases, to the want of ability, or furniture of a superior quality. But the idea of going to the woods to worship, was a new thing under the sun, especially in our refined New England. The meeting was under the supervision of the Rev. P. Moriarty, presiding elder, whose personal appearance was dignified and commanding. The Rev. S. Cochran served as his aid—Messrs. F. Ward and R. Dillen, circuit preachers—Bishop Asbury and J. Crawford, unexpected visitors. These constituted their principal stand laborers—all men of decent, and some of extraordinary preaching talents—truly, men filled with the Holy Ghost. The above designated preachers, with the exception of one or two, are now no more. This encampment was rendered vocal, day and night, either with preaching, exhorting, singing, or prayer, while the voice of mourning was incessant. (Here I enjoyed all I could wish—scarcely heaven itself excepted.) The regulations and order of the

meeting were good. The arrangements, in reference to preaching, were as follows: The great leading doctrines of practical and experimental piety, were fully discussed and maintained; so that it seemed continually sounding in the sinner's ears, "Ye must be born again;" while others were battering down the enemy's fortress, in which they were so snugly intrenched—such as, "there is no God, no devil, no hell, no heaven;" or what seemed equally accommodating, and fully as safe, less suspected, and more popular, "that God had foreordained whatsoever comes to pass." My special business was to regulate and attend to the prayer meeting concerns, which furnished me with business enough. Those bodily exercises, noise, &c., produced no little remark and opposition, in our land of steady habits. I furnished all the Scripture warrant, proof, &c., that was in my power to grasp, in defense of this work. For frantic gazings, and pulse examinations, perhaps the Pentecost itself did not excel. In place, I will notice a prayer of Bishop Asbury's, before preaching. It is well known to all his contemporaries, that he was mighty in prayer. For diction, comprehension, and energy, not excelled, if equaled. He might well be called the Elijah of his day. This prayer was at a time of a great drouth, which seemed now to mantle nature in gloom. The

horizon was dressed in her azure hue, with an unclouded sun. His text was, "Behold, now is the accepted time," &c. Just as he closed, in his usual pathetic style, the heavens poured forth an abundant shower. He paused. "How much," said he, "is rain needed! Lord, now is the accepted time—let it descend—let it come," &c. His prayer for rain being now in full recollection, it produced the most pleasing sensations in the minds of the waiting assembly.

I pass to notice one more especial interference of Divine goodness—the Goliath of Goshen, Conn., a Mr. Munson, a man perhaps nearly seven feet high, and well proportioned, possessing great muscular strength. He prepared himself with an officer's hat, of the Revolutionary character, of an enormous size, having the rim fully extended. He called it his tent. He appeared head and shoulders above all the rest, and soon became distinguished as the big hatted man. He seemed destined to act as clown, or yankee droll—said but little; but moved his majestic form from place to place, to attract attention, &c. He was heard to say, striking his enormous thigh, "These pillars will never let me fall." However, it was not long before Judah's Lion met him in the way; when it was announced, accompanied with a simultaneous rush, "The big hatted man is down." This gentleman, it is believed, has ever

since sustained a christian character, and a useful relation in the Methodist Episcopal church.

Another extraordinary I will note. A young lady, perhaps unrivaled on the ground for richness and gayety of apparel, while passing round with her protector within the prayer circle, appearing to look down with much disdain upon a number of mourners then reclining on the benches, was heard to say, "Before I would be seen in this situation, I would go to hell." Thoughtless youth! Perhaps before she had passed round a second time, she was prostrated, with all her pride and finery, in the dust. How true it is, that those that "exalt themselves, shall be abased." She continued, for sometime, crying and pleading for mercy; when she arose, clad in the robes and brighter jewelry of salvation, leaping and praising God. While a sister was looking for her comb, lest, in her ecstasy, she might spoil it under her feet, "Never mind, my sister," said she, "if I have lost my comb, I have found Jesus." This meeting closed with victory on Immanuel's side.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Second Camp Meeting Attended—An Extraordinary
Display of Divine Power.

I LEFT our Jerusalem, with my commission renewed. So *then round about* I endeavored to preach (if not fully) the gospel of Christ. I next found myself in the neighborhood of New Rochelle, where I met with a kind reception. As circumstances seemed to require it, I labored with my hands, for a short season. Another camp meeting was announced, to be holden on Long Island, between New York and New London, at a place called Cow Bay, which was a beautiful basin, forming a safe harbor for shipping, with an entrance by a narrow passage. On entering, at our left stood the light-house, with her lofty dome. The camp ground was large and commodious. It appeared as if nature had formed this spot for uses of this kind. The ground formed a kind of amphitheatrical elevation. Here I saw an accommodation, such as I never witnessed before or since. Clams and oysters were taken in the immediate neighborhood of the meeting, and roasted on their fires. Much pains was taken in the formation and erection of tents, which were large and convenient. I was informed some of them were obtained at the United States Ar-

senal. This gave them a suitable airing. Why not accommodations of the kind in all neighborhoods of such deposits, and make this species of military furniture, if not swords and spears, subservient to this best of domestic purposes? In the course of the meeting, in company with a brother preacher, I was appointed to count and ascertain the number of vessels attendant, with the wagons and carriages. The former we ascertained to be rising of sixty—the latter were so intermixed and crowded over a large space of ground, we abandoned the undertaking. This, which was not a small fleet of shipping, presented a most sublime appearance, with their colors flying; but more so, when considered they were in attendance on Him who was once clad in the mock robes of Jewish royalty. This, to say the least, was the most numerous and popular camp meeting I ever witnessed. It is believed the average number in attendance was sixteen thousand. It was conducted under the supervision of the Rev. J. Crawford, presiding elder, pro tempore. I had an appointment the succeeding evening after my arrival, if recollection serves. Having sung and prayed, and read my text; when a brother rose behind me, and requested liberty to speak, which was granted. He commenced, in an artless manner, to give a few prominent features of his religious experi-

ence. Perhaps there was no little mortification felt on the stand. It was said, "Proceed, proceed;" however, a few moments explained the whole matter. The Lord made bare his arm. Such a display of Divine power I never witnessed. Truly, the slain of the Lord were many. It appeared that the God of armies had truly come down to the camp of Israel, to deliver. We left the stand, secured additional aid, and collected the wounded from every part of this numerous assembly—there being a suitable spot selected, covered with straw, carpet rugs, &c., where they were placed in rows, at which time animal life, with some, appeared suspended. How marvelous is this! but it was the Lord's doings. After the prayer meeting had progressed sometime, we were visited by a tremendous storm of wind and rain, direct from the Atlantic; but to the astonishment of the people, the candles remained undisturbed, emitting their usual lights. All this wind and rain produced no apparent inconvenience to the worshiping assembly—the prayer meeting continued without interruption. This extraordinary phenomenon was published at the time. What is it but the exercise of that power which controlled the agitated elements in the neighborhood of *Galilee*? On the succeeding Sabbath, I preached on, "The gospel of the kingdom"—Matt., xxiv, 14; and was

followed by brother J. C., on, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish," &c.—Acts, xiii, 41. This last discourse, in view of circumstances, perhaps has not been excelled since the Pentecost. We leave the amount of good done at this meeting for the disclosures of *eternity*. I left on board a vessel literally filled with happy souls. Was not this a floating chapel? The sublimity of this sail was interesting. Several vessels were in company, with a pleasant breeze, and a smooth sea; but the best of all, Jesus was on board. Religious exercises were continued during our passage. I landed at New Rochelle, and resumed my former employment. Obtaining some aid, I purchased a horse, and started for the north, having received an invitation from the Rev. P. M., to labor within the bounds of his district, which extended to the northwest part of Massachusetts.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

First Visit to Massachusetts—Providential Interferences.

HAVING attended to necessary preparations, I started; and with usual stoppages, I at length arrived in Pittsfield, Mass. Here I met with welcome homes, at father Ward's

and J. Stowe's, where I saw their preachers, J. Robison and J. M. Smith. These brethren treated me with kindness, that never will be forgotten. In a few days I started in company with brother S.; with whom I remained a day or two, and left for a quarterly meeting, on Whitingham circuit. The winter was approaching, in a colder latitude than I was accustomed to. I passed over a mountainous country, of dreary aspect. I frequently asked myself, "Why spend your life in this way, a stranger among strangers?" But the Lord said, "Go," and I must obey. I held meetings on and among these mountains, hills and vales. But there was little prospect of good, as there were so many various sentiments closely allied to immorality and irreligion, that the way of gospel truth appeared completely hedged up. This was a time and place to try the souls of Methodist preachers. "These fellows, that had turned the world upside down, had come hither also. These are," they said, "false prophets, that should arise in the latter days." Notwithstanding the salvation of these elect was considered as secured, on basis firmer than the pillars of heaven, yet they appeared extremely afraid that these men would demolish them, and thereby thwart the purposes of God.

I at length arrived at the town of Row, and stopped at the hospitable mansion of an old pioneer, the Rev. E. Ward, who had

recently retired from the itinerant field, with an emaciated body; but a soul as entire and capacious as ever.

An appointment was made for the ensuing evening, when I preached to an attentive congregation. While making my application, a loud cry was extorted, "Lord, have mercy on me!" This was heartily responded to by father and mother Ward, who sprang to this late returning daughter, fell on her neck, &c., which terminated in a heavenly banquet. It is due to Philomela, to say, she has remained *faithful*. I left, in company with father Ward and several others, for Liden—attended quarterly meeting, where, perhaps, there was some good done, and returned with my company—tarried a few days with this affectionate family—recruited, and started for the town of Adams. This was a day of gloominess and darkness. My way was literally through and over the most rugged mountains, in part covered with snow. I at length arrived in the town of Florida, situated on the summit of what was called Adams, or Green mountain. Here I thought my travel for the day must close, as I was much fatigued, hungry, and chilled with cold. "Where am I to tarry to-night?—no money—no friends—in a land of few inhabitants, and apparent small means, and perhaps less disposition to receive a person of my description." I called at a house, fond-

ly hoping to receive an invitation to tarry for the night. (I knocked at the door, and was bid to come in; and as I advanced towards the fire, the man of the house sprang and seized the tongs, swearing at a most shocking rate, stating, "You are a Methodist run-about preacher—out of my house—out of my house!") I begged the privilege of warming by his fire, but was denied, as though a contagion was dreaded. I stepped out of the door, when it followed me with a tremendous crash.) I resumed my journey, passed the summit, and descended the huge mountain, in a dark night, and crooked road. I kept myself from freezing by exercise, and crowding my hands under the saddle. After a travel of several miles, I arrived in the town of Adams, and approached, by direction, the spacious mansion of a brother J. Jinks, now exhorter and class-leader. This was a welcome home, with a Lydia's kindness. The next day being Sabbath, I met a large, respectable congregation, in his dwelling, to whom I preached the Word of life. I was greatly assisted and blessed in my own soul—lost sight of the past, and encouraged to trust for the future. I gave out an evening appointment, and dismissed. There was considerable inquiry for a young lady (R. K.), who had disappeared. After considerable search, she was found shut up in an upper chamber. An arrow had pierced

her heart. She was brought down stairs in deep distress. We prayed for her until nearly the hour for preaching. This was a night long to be remembered. The arm of the Lord was made bare. I introduced my roll, when many gave their names as volunteers for the kingdom. We engaged for a prayer meeting, which continued most of the night. This was a slaying time, but our Physician was eminently near to heal. A young Mr. Jinks, son and member of the family, disappeared also. Perhaps after an absence of two days, he was found, as the former, shut up in a room—finally brought forth into the marvelous light. He is now a minister in Ohio of celebrity, of the Presbyterian order. He tells me he has never forgotten that day of his espousal to Christ—believes and preaches this old fashioned Bible religion. After a protraction of these meetings for some days, by the urgent request of young brother Jinks, I ascended, in company with him, the noted Saddle mountain. Its base was in this neighborhood, but its top appeared among the clouds. The regular road for its ascension was some three miles on its more northern side. However, to save travel, we ascended directly from this place; but we had no road. My guide went ahead, climbing its rugged surface, covered with spruce, birch, and hemlock, and I followed. When perhaps half the distance, I

gave out. But through his encouragements, and being aided by the skirt of his coat, he taking hold of the hanging boughs, we finally reached, not its summit, but what was called the notch, or recess, which presented a new world. This kind of middle region was highly cultivated, containing a dense population of healthy, blooming dairymen; who could look down upon their neighbors below, as though they occupied a separate planet. Enough of this. Our business here was to plant the standard of the cross. A meeting was accordingly appointed for evening, at a Mr. Wilber's, where I preached, "Ye must be born again." The Lord attended his Word, and many were pricked to the heart. Our visit ultimately terminated in the conversion of many souls; and finally in the organization of a respectable society. After a tarry of some days, I resumed my labors in the valley, where I met with their preachers from Pittsfield. Here, we might say, the sowers and reapers rejoiced together. They received many into the church. It is presumed our Adams expedition ended in the acquisition of some one hundred, it is to be hoped, of such as shall be saved. I now leave for Pittsfield, the pride of Massachusetts.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A Place in the Inn for the Savior—A Snow Storm—
A Narrow Escape—Nothing Lost in doing Right.

HERE I found “a looking forth as the morning.” I joined in with my brethren, day and night, until she came forth “terrible as an army with banners.” This blessed work extended, continued, and increased in interest during the balance of the conference year. I had preached in the east part, so called, on Christmas morning, and returned to the west to finish the day. On my arrival, I discovered my congregation was not collected. I rode under a tavern shed opposite the meeting-house, walked into the bar-room, to have access to the fire; when I saw the portly landlord, seated with two gentlemen—a decanter standing on a table near at hand. I sat a few moments, and not a word was spoken; however, I was eyed closely. I remarked to his majesty, “Sir, it is in the neighborhood of eighteen hundred years since there was an application made at an inn, to receive the infant Savior—in reference to which this day is anniversarized—but there was no place in the inn for him. I wonder if it is the case to-day.” He stared at me, evidently resisting his feelings for a short time, and broke out, “Yes, O, yes. Pray for me, a poor sinner.” He went

down on his knees, when his company fled without delay. A part of his family came rushing in, whom the Lord laid hold of and prostrated. This was a time of refreshing. In a few days thereafter, I started for the north part of the circuit, and enjoyed a banquet with the Vermonsters. Old Ponnal is visited. At a Sabbath appointment, which was at a Mr. Dunning's, I saw a gentleman of note in the congregation, with whom I had previously, in Williamstown, entered into covenant to pray for a given period, in secret. I saw him standing in the crowd. After concluding, I gave an invitation for all such as wanted religion, to come forward for prayer; when he fell down on his knees and prayed aloud for mercy. This produced a universal outcry over the house. Many souls will remember this meeting when time shall be no more. After accomplishing my little work in these parts, I returned to Pittsfield, by the way of Adams, where I was overtaken by one of the greatest snow storms I ever witnessed. After a few days tarry, I resumed my travels, with the snow as high as my feet, while sitting on my horse—in many places thrown up in heaps, as high as my head. My poor beast had to press, rise, and plunge, as if swimming against a strong current. That day's travel came near costing me my life, the effects of which, it is thought, are now realized. The circum-

stance to which I refer, took place in crossing the bridge over the Housetonie river. The snow being removed by the wind, my horse took affright, and made three leaps forward with great force. On his third, he got his foot fast, when he came down on his side, with full weight, upon me; however, he sprang off instantly, and stood over me, when I came to myself. A gentleman was near at hand, who remained on his beast for the time being, supposing I was dead; but when he saw me struggle, he dismounted and came to my assistance. He raised me to my feet, while blood was issuing from my mouth and nose. Through his aid, I was conducted to the house of the Rev. R. Green. On my approach, much alarm was produced, as it was supposed life was nearly extinct. No pains, expense, or effort were wanting, with this kind family, to afford me relief, and heal my wounds. I would ask the preachers of early times, if this was not always a Samaritan's inn?

There is, in the preceding, a circumstance overlooked, that might be beneficial to some of my readers. Though not exactly in the order of time, I insert it here, that nothing be lost. On my first visit in this section of country, some two months previous to the above named, I preached at a father Andrew's. The congregation was large and attentive: when the Lord made bare his arm

in the awakening of many, and the conversion of some. Early on the ensuing day, a Mr. B. called to see me and my horse, stating that he had seen me pass on the preceding day, when he noticed my beast; that he believed he had one that would exactly mate it—"how old?" &c. He repaired to the barn, viewed, and it was even so. "I have one," said he, "that will suit you far better for riding. She is considered the best in the county, if not in the state. I will give you a good trade." I stated such was not my business among them; that I never had exchanged but once; and had got one I was well suited with. He appeared much disappointed, and went into the house. On inquiry, I found his family was among the mourners the preceding evening. This had its effect. On a second thought, it was suggested I should accommodate the stranger, in view of surrounding circumstances—perhaps it might be productive of good. I accordingly took his beast, with all its superior excellences, at his own proposal, notwithstanding I supposed I gave him the best bargain. I soon ascertained I was imposed on. Perhaps there never was a greater piece of deception. I traveled a few miles south to meet some appointments—returned, and found the neighborhood in a kind of tumult, consequent upon Mr. B.'s imposition. A General Wright, not a professor, sent me express

word, if the said Mr. B. refused to return my beast, not to give myself any farther trouble, that he would take the whole responsibility upon himself, and secure it for me, or its worth, free of expense. I pondered all these things over in my mind: (1). The probability is he will refuse to exchange back; and so it was, for the beast was sold. (2). To use coercive measures, will be attended with difficulties. He will oppose his family that are now seeking religion; and what is the value of a horse, when compared to the loss of a soul? (3). If the General undertakes this business, it will be the same in its results—this good work, which is now retarded, will be stopped. In view of all the surrounding circumstances, I concluded it was better to suffer wrong than to do wrong. I called to see the gentleman, and found matters even so. I informed him what the General had said, which seemed to produce some alarm; but I stated I should forbear any further proceedings, for the reasons above named. I reminded him that we should meet this whole matter at a superior tribunal, and so we parted. I then proceeded to conciliate feelings, and encourage and forward the good work. I ask, was not this a species of sacrilege, as the horse was employed in the service of the Lord?

I will venture the following sentiment, in view of the past and future, in reference to

these matters, which I consider in perfect accordance with reason and Revelation; that is to say, whenever an act is performed, with a direct view of promoting any great moral, or religious good, which requires sacrifice of any species of property, which is subject to common casualties, loss, or discontinuance, &c., that in that particular species, or article of property, future success will be awarded in time, by special acts of Providence. But in reference to its opposite; that is to say, the act is performed from mercenary, selfish, or fraudulent motives, which has a direct tendency to fraught objects, or purposes of this character, whether anticipated by the individual, at the time, or not, that what is termed misfortunes, losses, bleedings, &c., in direct reference to this particular ill-gotten property, if it is not to be extended any farther, must be the inevitable consequence to be realized, in the present life, according to the established order of Heaven, in the divine government. We predicate this doctrine on that well known, admitted principle, that there are acts performed by men, to which there is a special reward to be realized in time, as well as the infliction of punishment in this life, for certain particular crimes committed.

I add, with grateful recollection, that the truth of the above doctrine I have abundantly realized, in reference to that small sacri-

fice I made, in view of circumstances, as set forth; however, in other species of property, perhaps not more prosperous than others of my fellow men.

‘The favors of my Pittsfield friends to the Maryland boy, as I was called by some, are still duly appreciated. This year wound up what I have called my juvenile mission, which commenced on the day of my conversion. With the exception of a few presents, I received nought from any man; but these hands have ministered to my necessities.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Joined the New York Conference—First Circuit.

THROUGH the advice of preachers and friends, my name was carried forward to the New York annual conference, which commenced its session in May following, at Quemen’s Patent, in the year 1807; when a regular recommendation, with my papers, containing licenses, certificates, testimonials, &c., were presented, accompanied with petitions for my return to Pittsfield circuit. I was accordingly admitted on trial, and appointed to Dutchess circuit, with D. Ostrander and W. Fradenburg. This, with the exception of a few of the first rounds, might

be called a year of one continued protracted meeting; however, shifted in meeting the regular appointments, as reformation succeeded reformation, the circuit being extensively large, embracing a portion of three states, New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut; but our brother O. being an experienced officer, kept the little army in successful operation, notwithstanding there was a formidable opposition from the discordant sentiments which prevailed in this part of the country. Rest days or nights, were scarcely named or known with us. I close the year with giving the following: Brother O., having returned from his northern tour, to his family, who resided in Amenia, which was our meeting place, informed me he had left an appointment at Mt. Washington, Mass., but for me to leave no more, the prospect being dull, it never would warrant the time and labor. I accordingly went, and found it even so. A small, hardened, proud congregation, with the exception of a few individuals. I accordingly informed the people they could not expect any more preaching; that we could shake off the dust from our feet, as a testimony against them. I put up with a father King, who, like old Simeon, had been waiting, praying, and looking a long time, for the salvation of this people. There was an intelligent looking young girl in the family, a grand-daughter. After family worship, I

conversed with her about setting out to get religion; but to no apparent effect. In the morning I renewed it; and with hard persuasion, she agreed to pray in private, three times a day, for a given period; at the expiration of which time, I left an appointment, stating I would redeem this time, by an increase of labors. When on my way to meet this appointment, I heard Mt. Washington was all in a flame, meeting every night, &c. On my arrival, I was hailed by these aged grand parents and child, with "welcome here," &c. The fact was, the young woman, in a few days after I left, looked a little beyond the watchman, found the Savior, and held him fast. She went round among her young associates, and prayed with them. This blessed work finally terminated in the acquisition of about one hundred hopeful conversions.

The following digression will be pardoned: Some two years since, when on my way to the Erie conference, I fell in company with a brother King. On hearing my name called, he inquired, "Are you the Swayze that preached at Mt. Washington, Mass., some thirty years since?" "I am the man;" when he drew nigh, raised my hat, and exclaimed, "Can it be possible! Truly—you are the very man." After we had retired, the brother continued, "You, sir, are my gospel father; I heard you preach (referring

back to those days); when God awakened me and several others, young men, who are, or have been, in the itinerancy." To add to this unexpected salutation, on entering aboard the steamboat, at Maysville, for Jamestown (as he bore me company), he being in the advance, met on deck the Rev. Z. H. Coston, which appeared to be a joyful meeting, with feelings truly reciprocal. On my near approach, brother C. politely, and most affectionately introduced brother K. to me as his father in the gospel, upon which brother K. returned the compliment of introducing me to brother C., as standing in the same relation to him. "This," said Mr. King, "was a brother to the young lady"—as above referred to. This venerable minister had traveled some sixteen years, as he informed me, in one of our western conferences—located because of ill-health. Is not this a third generation, according to our gospel lineage? Does not this whole matter go to say, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that?" &c.—Eccles., xi, 6.

What an exhibition there will be when the books are opened! My reader will not charge me with egotism, in naming these things. It is done, (1), to show my junior brethren in the ministry, not to abandon an old appointment, until every possible effort

is made to effect reform; (2), to encourage the practice of conversing freely, in a suitable way, with wicked children, in those families where they lodge; (3), to show there may be a vast amount of indirect good accomplished through their instrumentality, which never will be known in time. (4). We see from the above, that God makes use of what we call simple, or small means, to accomplish great objects. 'This may apply to the membership, as well as the ministry, in effecting much good.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A Work of God on Livingston's Manor—First Society formed in Hillsdale.

THERE was a young man, who attended these mountain meetings, who resided, at the time, a few miles from what was called Livingston's Manor, a subject of the revival, who urged me to visit their neighborhood, naming the destitution and wickedness of the place. As he had succeeded in getting a door opened at a Mr. E.'s, there was an appointment given out. I attended; but there was but little prospect of good. My colleagues also preached to them, to about the same effect. I made a second trial, when the enemy arrayed in formidable phalanx

around the house. We were suddenly attacked by a volley of stones, dashing against the house. One of the company stood at the window near me, hallooing, repeating, "You are a liar." However unpleasant at the time, I considered it as a favorable symptom. I therefore gave out another appointment, which was attended by a large, respectable congregation, from the neighborhood of the Hudson turnpike. I named as a text, "And the door was shut."—Matt., xxv, 10. All was deep attention. I closed, dismissed, and took my seat. Having no directions to leave an appointment for my colleague, and being rather at a loss to know my own duty, having abundant work elsewhere, I sat a few minutes, thinking this matter over, when I discovered the congregation remained on their seats. I named to them my hesitations, and concluded, by saying, I would come again, if there was a prospect of doing good; and I knew of no better way to test this matter, than for such as felt desirous to seek religion, to come forward and give me their names, and I would pray for them. A Col. Peaksly's lady then came through the crowd, and said, "Sir, will you take my name?" She then addressed the congregation, and said, "Come, my neighbors, it is high time we changed our manner of living; not a professor among us, raising families without the fear of God. Let us set an ex-

ample. You are only waiting one for another. Let us now set out together." These statements were made in a style of native eloquence, which would seem self-sufficient to wake up the sympathy of angels; when her daughter and sister, with some eight or ten of her most respectable neighbors, came forward and gave me their names. In conclusion, I gave out another appointment. On my arrival, I found six of the number happily converted. I remained with them, preaching every night, about ten days, and organized a class of thirty members; which society, from a late notice in the Christian Advocate and Journal, has grown up into a large, respectable station, where honorable mention is made of these meetings. I conclude by saying, in reference to our Hillsdale reformation, that I called in Buffalo at a Mr. C.'s mansion, to tarry for the night; when the landlord approached me with a lady holding his arm, inquired my name, and asked me if I had any recollection of him or his lady? I replied I had not. He then proceeded to make some statements, by which he thought I would recognize him. "This woman," said he, "is one of your converts," referring to the time and place, as above named. "She went out to hear you preach. On her return, I made her promise she would never go to hear you again. She never did;" and with a full

heart, and flowing eyes, he said, "Will you forgive? I believe God has." Here I met with a mother in Israel, and a home for me and mine.

I cannot close my narration of facts and circumstances, for this year, without naming the following, as they had their origin on this circuit—which go to show those who believe with me, that the great leading and primary object of preaching, is to save souls, any where, and by all proper means; that the minister of Christ ought never to be discouraged. Whether the seed is sown in the morning or evening, it matters not—whether this or that be the means, in the hands of the Spirit it may be made the wisdom of God, in bringing about this all-important end. Some years since, at one of my camp meetings in Ohio, I requested those preachers, it being a suitable time, who had previously occupied the stand, to improve a little time in relating some of the most prominent parts of their christian experience, which might serve as a confirmation, according to apostolic usage, of the truth of the doctrine which they had preached, and close the exercise with a prayer meeting. This was done for a change, partly for variety's sake; when the Rev. W. P. arose and stated: some twenty-five years since, when a boy, residing in Dutchess county, that he, in company with a black boy, were raking

hay, when a stranger, passing the road, stopped, dismounted, and hitched his horse, came to them and asked the black boy if he knew he had a soul, and that it must exist in happiness or misery after death. They both stood and heard with astonishment. These with a few additional remarks, when he left, retired to his beast, and rode off. I never removed from the spot, nor spoke; but stood gazing until this stranger was out of sight. There, said he, God awakened me, which ultimately terminated in my conversion. I had no recollection, at this moment, of all this matter; when he turned around, and laid his hand on my head, and said, "Here is that stranger." The Lord has his own way in accomplishing his purposes.

A concluding circumstance. A brother I., a preacher of note in Ohio, informed me, that in the course of that year, I, by the request of the teacher, visited their school, when I preached a little sermon to the children, and he was one of them. "There," said he, "I received my awakening, which terminated in my conversion." It was a kind of pass-word with Bishop Asbury, to the young preachers, "See to the children."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Conference in Amenias—Appointment to Buckland Circuit.

HAVING wound up my little work on this circuit for the year, I repaired to Amenias, where our conference had commenced its session for 1808, with Bishop Asbury in the chair, then the only remaining bishop. About these days, through a mysterious, inexplicable Providence, I was first introduced to Miss F. P., who at a subsequent period became my partner. The New York conference, at that time, included the Canadas, with all the Genesee country—perhaps preachers in attendance about one hundred. These, with their beasts, were well provided for, principally by four brethren, Messrs. G. and F. Ingraham, and P. and F. Powers. These brethren were so abundantly blessed in their basket and their store, the succeeding year, as they said, at a subsequent period, they petitioned and obtained another. Those were days of great harmony and love among preachers and members. I received my appointment for Buckland circuit, alone—a northern frontier for Methodism, which included a territory sufficient for four or five circuits of modern size. Perhaps there were five or six small classes—hills and mountains almost innumera-

ble—Calvinism abundant, and perhaps as ancient as the settlement of the country. But why will a living man complain? I was told that my predecessor, the Rev. L. C., traveled this circuit a part of the year on snow shoes; however, with hard plunging. I accomplished my travel on horseback; and though homes were scarce, and far between, I was seldom under the necessity of knocking, without finding an open door, with a brother's hand to welcome the messenger of salvation. Warm hearts are always an excellent substitute for carpeted floors, and green teas; however, the reverse of this, with few exceptions, was the case with those out of the church. On my arrival at one of my first appointments, near what was then called Baptist Corners, I called to inquire my way, when I was accosted by an elderly looking gentleman, of dark complexion, with a large cocked hat, as follows, "Where are you from? where are you going to? what is your name? and what is your business? I suppose you are one of these run-about preachers. We have priests enough in town already. We dont want you, calling the people from their work, breaking that commandment, which says, 'Six days shalt thou labor,' &c. You are all a set of popes. You wont let your people take a dram, unless they ask the priest." I then broke in, and said, "Suffer me to speak, and after I

have spoken, mock on;" and added, "We will pray"—knelt down and commenced, when my antagonist cleared himself. I repaired to my appointment, at a Mr. D.'s, a good conditioned, kind man, but professed no religion; however, with this exception, the family was pious. I commenced preaching to a small, scattered congregation; but was soon interrupted by a young man, who rushed in with his horsewhip in his hand, and placed himself immediately before me. I requested him to sit down; but to no effect. No one interfered. I stopped preaching, and waited his leisure; when he seated himself, but kept lashing his whip about. I dismissed the meeting, tarried all night, and called to see the Squire next day, entered a complaint. He wrote him a friendly letter. I was informed, he came and made some confession to the family, and so it ended. If we had a free gospel for the people, there appeared to be no law for us, in those days. I went to Buckland, where I found open doors, and warm hearts. Here I preached on Sabbath, to an attentive, intelligent congregation, met a lively class, and I believe good was done.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Influence of Antinomian Principles in New England.

I PROCEEDED to fill my regular appointments, hunting up those sheep and lambs, which, it might be said, were in the midst of wolves. I found them much united, earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. I soon discovered that war with some of the prevailing sects, was unavoidable, if good was done; and that the only resort was our closets and Bibles, together with Messrs. Wesley and Fletcher, especially their polemic works. Those were the weapons of our warfare; not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of these strongholds. I will give a few additional specimens of what we had to meet in those times, which came within my own observation in the course of the year. I called at an inn. On my approach, I found the landlady seated at her fire, apparently in great trouble. I inquired the cause. She replied, "I have just returned from the burial of my infant child, and am afraid it is lost." "Why so?" said I; when she replied, "Because our priest told us last Sabbath, there were infants in hell not a span long." This shocked me to the very soul. I took up the subject, and endeavored to rescue her infant from the tormenting flames,

and place it in the bosom of Him who has said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." She appeared fully relieved in her mind, and thanked the stranger. I preached at this house, subsequently, and it appears good was done. It is due to this ancient order to say, that the above kind of preaching is now, with few exceptions, detested among them. About this time, I preached in Conway, at the house of a moderate Calvinist Baptist, to a crowded, attentive congregation. After I had closed, I sat down in the crowd; when several arose in turn, as usual in that place, to bear witness to the truth, as they called it. A Baptist sister, who appeared very pious, and much engaged, closed her remarks, with saying, "Let us pray;" when she knelt down, and commenced with, "Lord, strip my Baptist brethren of Calvinism." This produced such a scene of confusion as I never before witnessed in a religious assembly. Poor woman! she was run over, and finally stopped in her prayer. Was not this a kingdom divided against itself? I left, and returned no more. In the course of the winter, in attending a regular appointment in Holly, I approached the house of a brother E.; and as I passed the window, a Mrs. Burroughs, who was sitting in a private room, with her aged mother, saw me. She inquired of her mother, "Who is that?" "It is our preacher," was

the reply. "What preacher?" said she. "Our circuit preacher." "My dear mother, have you them awful beings about you? Where is he going?" "He is to preach here to-night." "What! at this house?—I will be off." "What is the matter, my dear child? have you ever heard a Methodist preach?" "No, neither do I wish to; why they are the false prophets, that are to arise in the latter days." The mother finally, after much persuasion, prevailed on her daughter to remain, stating she could tarry in her room during the preaching. I accordingly commenced preaching in another part of the house, and took for my text, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" While treating on the sufferings of Christ, as illustrative of the greatness of this salvation, I perceived the old lady's door open, in part, which continued opening by small moves, until, behold! the madam was in full view—perhaps to see a Methodist preacher, for the first time. I closed; when she drew back and shut the door. The crowd being great, and pressing round the fire, I proposed to brother E., we would retire into mother's room, and hold our class meeting—he being ignorant, as well as myself, at the time, of what had passed between the mother and daughter. We accordingly repaired into the room, and held our class meeting; when

I discovered the lady reclining upon a bed, manifesting signs of much agitation of mind. Having done with the class, I spoke to her; when she looked me in the face, with apparent surprise, and said, "Are you a man or an angel?" "A man," said I, "a feeble mortal like yourself." With a few additional remarks, I retired; and so this matter ended until morning; when her husband arrived, to convey her home. She immediately called him on the opposite side of the room, when a consultation took place. He probably supposing I heard what was passing, remarked to me, "Sir, my wife wishes me to invite you to Williamsburg, to preach, and I must confess that I am afraid, as there never was any of your order in our town. If I should be the means of introducing the Methodists there, I do not know but they would burn my house and barn, or do me some private injury, as the people have heard so many bad things about them. Our priest, Lord, is a great opposer." I replied, "Sir, you are certainly in a bad condition, in our boasted land of freedom;" adding that I was abundantly supplied with places to preach; and so we parted. However, this gentleman, in the course of some three or four weeks, sent a messenger to invite me to preach in his town. I gave the time, and accordingly went; where I met a host of spectators, if not hearers, to see, if no more. It was a

little diverting to behold the solicitude manifested, in getting a first sight at me, as I entered the door. I endeavored to preach them a plain, practical discourse, and not disturb their great Diana. They gave me a quiet, attentive hearing. After I had closed, I informed them, if a door would be opened, and they were willing to hear such kind of preaching, I would visit them again; when it was said, "Come to my house," by several. It was finally concluded best to have the meeting in the same place.

CHAPTER XL.

Introduction of Methodism in Williamsburg, Mass.—
Conclusion of my Labors on Buckland circuit.

I CAME a second time, and met an increased congregation; when I strove to give them a thorough view of Methodism, in its doctrines, morals, and institutions. All appeared to move on harmoniously. I also read the General Rules of our church. Eight persons volunteered to be organized into a class. I told them I would not form the class then, but would take their names on a piece of loose paper, and finish the business when I returned—they could thereby have longer time for consideration—I would leave a Discipline, which they could examine for

themselves. On my succeeding visit, if the world was not upside down, Williamsburg was. All these transactions had come to the priest's ears. I soon discovered, on my arrival, that something had taken place. After I had closed my meeting, Mr. B. informed me, in substance as follows: that there was a great tumult in town; that my coming among them had produced a wonderful bustle; the priest, L., had called a special town meeting, or that it was done at his instance, which he attended, where many things were said against the Methodists; that they were considered and represented as a dangerous set of men, particularly the preachers, who are going about, breaking up churches, &c.; that we had two books of Discipline—one to read to the people, and the other was kept private among the priests, an iron rod to govern; that the paper, on which I had taken their names, was an obligation to pay me eighty dollars for preaching; that after many things, of a like character, were stated, a motion was made to shut all the doors in the town against me. Perhaps he stopped its passage, by saying he would shut and open his door to whom he pleased. A committee was appointed to go round and visit the people, who had attended to their business. He further stated he had neither seen nor heard any thing that would go to impeach my moral character, or impugn my motives. But so it was, and so it

is. Upon the whole, he thought perhaps it would be best to give it up—he was sorry, &c. I informed the gentleman I was perfectly willing to leave, for any interest I had in this matter; that all my appointments were made by their special request; but now I should request one: that he, with two, whom he might select, would act as a committee to their priest, and give my compliments to him, and request him to attend my meeting, where I would be prepared to answer to all these matters, and especially the libelous assertion, that I had attached their names to an obligation to pay me money for preaching, let it come from whom it might; that I would preach our doctrine in full, and he should have the privilege to reply, if he saw proper. He said it was certainly my due, and it should be attended to. The appointment was accordingly fixed, where I met a crowded assembly, who gave me, I thought, a fair, attentive hearing. I gave out as my text, “Hearken to me, I also will show mine opinion.”—Job, xxxii, 10. I commenced, with saying, or to this purport, that every moral and religious subject merited in themselves attention—it mattered not when, or by whom discussed—(hearken). I proceeded to show, (1), what an opinion was; (2), how an opinion was formed; (3), that every man had a right to his opinion, and to show it; and this kind of reciprocal discussion was the way to correct opinions;

(4), that every man, when convinced of an error, in his creed or opinion, was bound by every principle of moral honesty and propriety, to renounce it, and adopt a better. Having thus prepared the way, I endeavored to show my opinion, (1), on the doctrine of the fall of man; (2), on the doctrine of the general atonement; (3), on justification by faith; (4), on the perseverance of the saints; (5), on christian perfection; and concluded with a few passing remarks on the ungentlemanly course that had been taken against me, and sat down and gave the ground to any that chose to occupy it. On this a portly looking gentleman, said to be a doctor, arose and stated, that he gladly availed himself of the opportunity to give his opinion—that he would give it in few words; which were, that the doctrine advanced and maintained by the stranger, was the gospel of the kingdom; and as to Calvinism, he believed it was hatched in hell, and the devil was the father of it, and sat down. I dismissed, and here was the end of this great scuffle. I organized a class. This, in addition to a few others, together with some acquisitions to the old classes, closed the year, in great harmony, love, and union.

CHAPTER XLI.

Marriage—Introduction of Methodism in Ashgrove—
White Creek.

IN the fall of 1808, after due reflection, in accordance with the advice of fathers and brethren in the ministry, I united in marriage to my Frances, the daughter of Col. Loring Peck, of Dutchess county, N. Y., then late of Bristol, R. Island. Having closed the labors of the year, as already noticed, I repaired to the conference, which was held in New York, May 10, 1809. Our conference sessions were looked upon as a kind of Pentecost, for renewing of commissions, fresh anointings, &c., as those seasons were usually attended with signal displays of the Divine presence, perhaps as connected with that injunction, "But tarry ye in Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Those special manifestations and refreshings, were confidently looked for and expected by preachers as well as members. Those were called conference revivals. Bishops present, Asbury and M'Kendree—the latter for the first time. My probation being closed, I was admitted into full membership, and ordained deacon. Those were days of much interest, toil, privation, love, and union, among the preachers—the latter well calculated to strengthen and support under the

former. It was truly interesting and encouraging to hear our preachers, in their pulpit exercises, giving their reminiscences of the past year. Those were days in which all were common sharers in tribulations, as this sect, as a body, were everywhere evil spoken of. It is well recollected, that Bishop Asbury remarked to the committee appointed to regulate the exercises of the pulpit during the session of conference, that he believed it was the general wish of the people, that the preaching should be principally performed by the "mountain boys," as he called them—directly those who had labored on the frontiers of the work. Such appears to have been the taste of our city hearers in those olden times. They would turn out by thousands to hear those backwoods preachers, as they were then called, notwithstanding some of them appeared much weather-beaten and war-worn. My appointment was announced for Cambridge circuit—M. B. Bull, Wm. Swayze, S. Sornborger.

That the enlargements of the work may more readily appear, I will give the butts and bounds of our circuit, as it then stood—extending south to the neighborhood of Lansingburg, or Cooksburg—north to North Chester, or Dominek—west, Schatacoke Point, following the meanderings of the Hudson river, to near its head, or source, crossing into Lousean, and Elm Hill—east,

Loom's Cork, White Creek, and Pollet, Vermont—interior points, Middletown, Cambridge, Ashgrove, Salem, Sandgate mountain, Fort Ann, Fort Miller, Fort Edward, Sandy Hill, Kingston, Queenston, Lake George, Schroon Lake, Thermand's Patent, and Johnstown, covering all the intermediate section of country; in which we visited wigwams, cabins, and ceiled houses, knowing how to want, and how to abound. The extent of our travel, taking the ins and outs, we calculated was in the neighborhood of six hundred miles every round—appointments from one to two per day, passing through a winter perhaps of as cold and tedious traveling as is realized in any part of America. Here I witnessed that noted cold Friday, on which day I traveled some four or five miles, facing a north wind, until my horse utterly refused to proceed further, he trembling with the cold as if he would fall to the earth. I wheeled about, and returned from whence I started—made my escape with a frosted face, hands and feet; but the kind, warm-hearted brethren soon thawed me out.

A few things in reference to our Ashgrove. This was the emporium of Methodism in northern New York, which received its name from a brother Ashton, one of its proprietors; who, with others, constituted the first Methodist society in this region. They emigrated from Ireland, in the days of Wesley,

being organized into a class by that venerable man of God, before leaving their native land. Father Baker still remained their leader, whose company was highly appreciated by the preachers of his day, as he was looked upon not only as Wesley's cotemporary, but as receiving such an appointment from this father of Methodism. These brethren made large purchases of land, and cultivated their farms in the best manner—built a spacious chapel, and provided well for their preachers—an intelligent, pious, plain, loving people. This mustard seed hath now produced a large tree, furnishing, within its expanding boughs, a happy retreat for many exposed to storms and tempests.

I give the origin of a respectable society, subsequently formed within said bounds. A certain Mr. Lucas had an extraordinary dream, which was in substance as follows: He dreamed he attended a religious meeting somewhere (which was a rare thing for him, as he was inclined to infidelity—he with his family moving in the fashionable circle of the day), and seated himself in a pew fronting the preacher, who fixed his eye upon him, which appears to have elicited from him a return of the compliment. He accordingly viewed the preacher with close attention. This, upon the whole, fixed upon his mind the identity of his person. Shortly after, he was informed that a strange preach-

er was expected to preach at the Baptist meeting-house, some few miles distant. He went to the meeting, and seated himself in front of the pulpit. When the preacher arose, he recognized him to be the man he had seen in his dream. This, with what he heard, got hold of his feelings. He accordingly spoke to the preacher before he left, and invited him to make it in his way to call at his house. Some few weeks thereafter, he met this preacher on the turnpike, in the neighborhood of Cambridge—stopped him and gave him all the particulars, as above related, and pressingly renewed his request for a visit from him. I accordingly went and preached in his house, to an attentive people. The final result was, he and his whole house embraced religion, in which we organized a respectable society, we trust, of such as will be ultimately saved. This introduced Methodism into that noted White Creek settlement. Was it not correctly said, Methodism, in its origin and spread, was a child of Providence?

CHAPTER XLII.

Immersion Attended with many Obstructions.

BEFORE I close my narrations of the special occurrences of this year, I will note two,

which may be added to the many of a circumstantial character, which go to say, at least, that baptism by immersion, as being of Divine appointment, is rather of a doubtful character. The first I shall notice, was that of a man I baptized in Dominek, it being late in the fall, water scarce, and difficult of approach; however, nothing would satisfy the good brother; but immersed he must be, and that now. We accordingly repaired to a little muddy stream. After going through with the usual ceremony, I laid him upon its surface, but soon found there was not sufficient depth to cover him, as he was a large man. My brethren in the ministry may judge, who have been placed in similar circumstances, exposed to the gaze of the multitude, what must have been my feelings at this juncture—there was no raising up or sinking down, as he appeared perfectly helpless, perhaps from some physical cause, absent or powerless at the time; however, I at length made out to immerse his head; when he took in a quantity of water, which produced instant strangulation, and with a mighty effort he sprang up, and left me standing some distance in the rear, making his way across a swale towards the people, contending as though he was in the convulsions of expiring nature. Whether he was immersed in every part, or not, I presume no one could determine. In view of all these cir-

cumstances, I could not but ask myself the question, Why is it thought strange that there is no explicit command for immersion in the Book of God?

My second, is the case of a dying female, which took place near the Schroon Lake. I had a meeting in Thermand, in what was then called Woodward's chapel. This was on the Sabbath succeeding the cold Friday, as already noticed. The day being so excessively cold, we had soon to dismiss. Having returned to my lodging place, I was soon called on by a messenger, who had come in great haste, to get me to go with him to baptize the above-named young lady. This was by her special request; although I was a stranger to her. He thought it probable that she would die before morning, as it was supposed she was in the last stages of pulmonary consumption. I was rather at a loss to know my duty in this case. It was late in the day, some six miles to ride, cold in the extreme, and no sleighing, roads extremely rough, &c.; however, father Woodward settled this matter, by proposing to carry me in a sleigh on the Schroon river, which extended to the spot. We accordingly started, following the meanderings of the river, perhaps doubling the distance. We arrived sometime after dark, found matters even so; the young lady placed in a warm room, surrounded by watchers and friends, who were

looking for her departure every hour—she was elevated upon pillows, which sustained her sinking system—she was nearly past raising or speaking. Being informed of my arrival, she appeared to revive. I drew nigh and spoke to her, found her happy in the Lord, as she had recently obtained religion. I supposed I was in the neighborhood where immersion was considered the only mode of baptism. I thought it proper to inquire into her views and feelings in reference to this subject. Rather supposing the calculation was to immerse her, I remarked, “Sister, is it your wish to have a place prepared, if possible, by cutting and removing the ice in the river, to baptize you?” She looked at me with much apparent astonishment, and replied, “No, sir; would it not be presumption to put me in the water at this time? you would never take me out alive. I am willing to live till the Lord takes me. Why not one handfull of water as good as the Schroon river or Lake?” I quieted her fears, by assuring her, that she was correct, and her wishes should be complied with. Water was provided, and I baptized her “*with* water;” that is, by applying the water to the subject, and not the subject to the water, as I write *with* my pen; that is, I apply it to the paper, not the paper to the pen, as in the case of immersion. On my baptizing her *with* water, she commenced

praising the Lord, stating all was done, now she was ready to go, which was soon the case.

I would ask my reader to look well to, and consider the following, in reference to the above—that all gospel requirements, as touching human salvation, are perfectly consistent with common sense operations—Revelation is addressed to rational beings, purely rational in its requisitions. Of course nothing is to be obstructed by an inversion of the common laws or operations of nature. Apply this to the first case noticed. In reference to the latter, I ask, (1). How could this pious, happy, dying sister have answered a good conscience, in her baptism, by adopting another mode; that is, if I had refused to administer it to her by effusion? Does not the apostle say, “Baptism is not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience?” Common sense says, “In the subject, not in the administrator?” (2). How is it possible for the Savior’s last commission to be duly performed, “baptizing them,” &c., among all nations, whether in the torrid, temperate, or frigid zones, north or south, east or west, winter or summer, day or night, sick or well, wherever the subject is to be found, if immersion be the only mode of baptism? It was supposed, at the time, that if this doubtful, hazardous undertaking had been commenced, to immerse her by cutting through the ice (then believed

to be frozen nearly, if not quite, to the bottom of the stream), if all other obstructions had been out of the way, it could not have been accomplished in season, as her departure was at hand. However, it will be distinctly and specifically understood that the above is not intended to detract from either the wisdom or piety of those who may differ in their views from the writer, respecting these matters—immersion being regarded as valid baptism. From a variety of considerations, he views the mode of effusion as having, to say the least, equal claims, in point of divine or direct Scripture authority, and in many, very many instances, cannot be dispensed with.

Having closed the labors of this conference year, it might have been said that our labors were not altogether in vain in the Lord, as we had some revivals; however not extensive out of the church, yet it is believed more so within its pale; which must be kept up in due proportion, as a kind of balance wheel to our reformation engine, that revivals may be productive and lasting. Much, *very much*, depends on good management. May I be permitted to say, a competent engineer (I mean the preacher in charge), who will keep his machinery in good repair, pay close attention, &c., will thereby preserve it in order. It is due for me to say, that my worthy colleague, the Rev. M. B. Bull, attended to all his pastoral duties, as they

should be. He well understood his business, and attended to it *in due season*.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Comparison of Past and Present—Utility of Camp Meetings.

THROUGH the providence of God, I was enabled to attend closely to my work during the year. As to family accommodations, we had all we asked for, which was but little. In this place, may I be indulged to note a few things in reference to our accommodations in those olden times, however not with a view to reflect or to attach blame, for there was none—neither to excite sympathy, as time and circumstances have put this out of the question; but our object is, so to present facts in their true light, as they then existed—that is as far as they came within our own personal knowledge; that by comparing past with present, it may more fully be seen what great things the Lord has done for us. Long moves, with the preachers, seemed unavoidable, considering the local situation, and extent of the circuits. Equally so was the frequency of those moves, the classes in general being poor, and few in numbers. This made several moves necessary on the same circuit,

during the year, as the preachers' families were necessarily dependent on those classes in their immediate neighborhoods, for a principal part of their support, their quarterage supplies being very small. If a preacher returned from his quarterly meeting with one, five, or ten dollars to his family, he was doing well. As to children's allowance, table expense, &c., it was scarcely thought of, much less claimed. We might ask, from whence was it to come? House rent and fuel were principally supplied without charge. Not unfrequently, an upper chamber, cellar, kitchen, mechanic shop, or out building, with temporary fixtures, supplied the parsonage, or preacher's dwelling. These, with long, unavoidable detentions from their families, contributed much to the tribulations of those days. . But what seemed to furnish a safe and secure retreat, in all such cases of emergency, was a father's home. The parents of preachers, and their wives, did much, very much, in providing for, and taking care of their families. How reviving, how animating the reflection, "*Father will take me in!*" What earthly name ever sounded, to a traveling preacher's wife, at this day, like that of *mother*? Methodist preachers were looked upon as a peculiar race of men, a class of transient sojourners. Perhaps this originated, in part, because of their devotedness to lives of privation and sacrifice.

Many of our good brethren thought, and no doubt believed this state of things essential to the existence of a living, successful ministry. Should it be thought strange, when they associated their preachers with that class of men that once dwelt in tents and tabernacles, "of whom the world was not worthy?" Their ministry was viewed as purely apostolic. We presume this was not doubted, as it related to pecuniary matters. That the great Head of the church has prescribed bounds and limits to the ministry, in reference to worldly matters, we have no doubt. The history of the church, in all ages, go to demonstrate this fact. However, there may be a state of things, in reference to all these matters, which time and its attendant revolutions must and will regulate. But its opposite extreme is to be viewed as more fatal in its consequences. With these reflections, we return to our regular narrative.

In this extensive circuit there was ground sufficient to have formed at least two districts of modern size, and only three meeting-houses: Ashgrove, Thermand, and Cooksburg (or town)—the latter an empty shell, truly emblematic of a large proportion of its attendants. Perhaps here was the longest and most severe moral dearth experienced in this whole land—all appeared like desolation; however, the succeeding year introduced a new state of things. It is worthy

of note, how mysteriously the Lord accomplishes his purposes. Our good old father Cook, who had stood for years nearly alone in this Sodom, heard of a camp meeting some twenty miles distant. He, with a view to accomplish a change in this state of things, strove to get his little class to go with him to this meeting; but to no purpose. I was informed not even one of his family could be prevailed on to accompany him. There was, however, a lady of some note, not far distant, who had informed him, that if ever a camp meeting came within her reach, she would attend it. The solicitous brother provided a mode of conveyance, and secured her attendance. This resulted in the conversion of her soul; and on her return, kindled a fire that revolutionized this whole neighborhood. The meeting-house had stood for years in an unfinished state, until its outward materials were on the decay. But we now behold all things made new—this house is stripped of its old covering, finished within and without, in a most commodious style. I called there some twelve months after, and preached; and what do I see!—a spacious temple, the body of which is nearly filled with living members, and galleries crowded. I could but adopt the language of one of St. John's elders, and inquire, "What are these that are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they!" Why not reply, in this case,

from camp meeting? Ah! thou highly honored mother, thou hast multiplied thy thousands. Is it a matter of surprise, that our immortal Asbury should once have remarked to a preacher, that he considered it a favor to date his ordination parchments at these meetings; adding, he wished to hand them down to posterity, and hoped they would always be continued in the church. We purpose to say more on this subject, in its proper place.

CHAPTER XLIV.

A Last Visit to my Father—Conclusion of the First Volume—A Letter to the Rev. D. Ostrander.

AFTER making known my wishes to my seniors in office, with their full consent, I started, some four weeks prior to the sitting of conference; first, to visit my companion, residing still at her father's, in Amenia, which, by their special request, continued to be her home for the principal part of two years, which, at the same time, met the emergencies of the day, but it cost me many long and tedious rides, in particular during the winter season, as those are northern regions; but similar arrangements were not uncommon with our itinerants in those days. After a few days tarry, I started to New Jersey, to visit an aged father for the last time—

found him, as usual, busily employed in his worldly matters, now rising seventy, still religiously disposed, occasionally read his Bible, and sang Methodist hymns. O, world, art thou not a usurper, a tyrant! How long wilt thou exert thy despotic control over frail, mortal man! After spending all the time I had, in view of other engagements, preaching and praying with my father and friends, I left, and went thirty miles south, to visit my native home. But O how changed! New owners, new regulations—old fields, rocks, and stones. Some half mile before I arrived at the old mansion, I crossed a small rill, meandering its course on my left. This waked up reflections in reference to gone-by years, as this little stream furnished some of my former juvenile excursions. I soon beheld our isin-glass mound; to which I repaired, viewed, and recollected past times. This spot furnished one of our prominent meeting places, as noticed in a preceding chapter. I followed this inviting stream—when the majestic rock presented itself, which was our mother's retreat—the infant's chapel. This *sacred bower* was made such by a *parent's tears—a mother's prayers*. However, I found the shrubbery removed, the appearance changed, but its identity remained entire. I spent perhaps an hour in surveying the surrounding scenery, which appeared uninviting, as it had lost all its for-

mer charms. I viewed and thought—kneelt and prayed. The reflection of the past was pleasing, the present was solemn, the future reviving. How applicable those lines of the poet!

“Thrice blessed bliss-inspiring hope!
It lifts the fainting spirit up—
It brings to life the dead.”

Our present narrative must close here, as we are at the extent of our limits. Upon a review of this little work, the author discovers that many corrections and improvements could be made, touching many things; and as far as it respects the book itself, they will remain until a second edition be issued, if called for; when suitable corrections will be made. In view of the past, may its humble author be permitted to say—

“Life seems like a bubble near the shore—
Once seen, then sinks to rise no more.”

The following letter was originally addressed by the author, as will be seen, to a special friend, and published in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, of June 29, 1838. It will also appear equally obvious, that its material part properly belongs to this narrative, according to the plan adopted and pursued; and as such, was intended when written, and will subsequently, in all probability, occupy its proper place. The writer is induced to introduce it here, for the time

being, (1), to give a little matter of more recent date; (2), with a view to meet circumstances, as life and health are uncertain; (3), it will be seen from its dates, and the writer's then as well as present relation to conference, that it embodies what might be considered the termination of his effective labors. Therefore, in case no more should appear, it may be considered as a kind of conclusion.

“Letter from the Rev. William Swayze to the Rev. D. Ostrander.

“DEAR BRETHREN:—May I be permitted to address an old friend through the medium of your columns, which may be received as a reciprocal reply to a late notice in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, headed, ‘The work of God on Long Island.’

“BROTHER OSTRANDER:—Those seasons you speak of go to say, you still feel that glowing zeal for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom which inspired your bosom in the days of other years. That the recital of this blessed work, however remote, will produce corresponding effects in those that read will be admitted, especially by such as have tasted that the Lord is gracious. How indispensable are those revival seasons to the existence of a living and successful ministry among us!

“We have recently perceived a kind of apostolic emulation—the whys and where-

fores matter not—the manifest result of which is, the exercise of that faith which is producing abundant fruit, ingathering, &c. I ask, Is not this the salt of the earth—the salt of the church? May its savoring, fructifying influence be realized not only in your eastern isles, but in those of our southern and western seas! Will not their corresponding echoes be returned from mountains, hills, and vales, until their soul-stirring, animating notes are heard and felt in every land, nation, tongue, and people? How animating the sound—‘Jesus reigns!’

“Permit me to say, that distance, time, and place, have never erased the full recollection of the year in which I received my first appointment with you. Your counsels, instructions, and deep solicitude manifested toward a junior brother are not forgotten. Was not that a year of jubilee? Let our six hundred increase tell this pleasing story. May I respond to your prophetic quotation, ‘The wilderness and the solitary places rejoice, and this desert blooms like the rose?’ Periodical notices say, ‘There are blessed times in the northern sections of our great valley.’ I have held, in unison, several protracted meetings the past winter, in accordance with that important advice, ‘Go where you are wanted most.’ We accordingly selected the northern and western sections of the Philadelphia and Erie canal, now construct-

ing. Our first meeting was in the town of Clarksville, a place (as usual during building operations) prominent for practical infidelity. Here coldness and deadness reigned. After much hard labor, with little apparent effect, Judah's Lion appeared in our midst. The thunder of his power brought many to own his sovereign sway. In conclusion, *seventy* gave their names for membership. The conversion of a Mr. R. I designate. He was noted for possessing a peculiar tact in the art of fighting. A little previous he had been in a violent contest with a Goliath-like Catholic. He came to the meeting, bearing the marks of his late conflict, especially on his outward garments, but he soon met with an arm Omnipotent, which brought him to acknowledge his inferiority. Being fully conquered, he arose clad in the spotless 'garment of salvation,' and now promises usefulness in the church. 'Behold, he prayeth!' The succeeding meeting was in a flourishing village, called Greenville. Here, as in the former, a hard contest ensued, when necessity required a little of St. Paul's stratagem, which accomplished much good—perhaps some would call it 'mechanical;' however, our preaching and praying were not *stereotyped*. Here, a professional gentleman, a man of note and influence, arose in the presence of a numerous audience, signifying his intention to commence a religious course,

and invited several of his acquaintances to meet him the ensuing morning at his own house, purporting to deliberate on the subject of setting out for religion. They accordingly met, passed resolves, &c. What objection is there to making religion a business matter? 'He that lives not by rule,' says the venerable Wesley, 'lives not at all.' This meeting closed with an addition to their number of *forty*, leaving many wounded spirits.

"The succeeding was in the town of Salem, which is the emporium of Methodism in western Pennsylvania, noted for age of membership, useful talents, &c. This is the place of our venerable Bishop Roberts' first rural location. Here I met him and his amiable companion eighteen years since, in their well regulated, though humble mansion, like an old Joshua, surrounded by his numerous friends and relations. The evening was agreeably spent in hearing him relate his first adventures, juvenile excursions, &c. He conveyed me to the spot where he, with others, formed their first class, under the shade of the evergreen—truly emblematic of their future prosperity. We now see, near this consecrated spot, a spacious temple erected. How little he expected that this far-remote forest should, at so recent a period, be vocalized with the songs of Zion, much less with a mariner's bugle on his

homeward passage! Truly, 'in the wilderness waters have broken out, and streams in the desert.' These retreats of ravenous beasts now furnish the peaceful walks of the redeemed! Our meeting was a time of peculiar refreshing to these old saints, their joys being much increased in seeing their children and neighbors brought in. Some five or six of the Bishop's near relatives were included. *Thirty* were admitted on probation, and *twice* that number of supposed hopeful conversions. May they all be numbered with the jewels of the kingdom!

"Our winter campaign closed in the town of Johnson, Ohio. Here we had to meet Napoleon's warring elements, storms of rain and snow, eruptions of earth, dark nights, sickness, &c. However, some fifteen or sixteen commenced a religious course, and more or less found peace in believing. Perhaps, through a false modesty, we omitted gathering these lambs into the fold—pardon.

A prodigal returned. My information is recently from a Presbyterian brother. He states a brother-in-law of his came to his house after an absence of many years, far advanced in crime, consequent on a life of prodigality. It seems he left his father in a most shocking manner, profanely swearing he never would confess or return if he rotted within one rod of his door! Thus he left a pious, expostulating father, and went

into a far country. Being now within a few miles of home, *without, however, any disposition to return*, his friend prevailed on him to accompany him to our meeting. After seating himself, I gave out my text, Luke, xv, 18, 'I will arise and go to my father,' &c. He made the case his own, 'came to himself,' and resolved to return. He retired fully awake to the enormities of his past life, concealing however his feelings until some distance from the meeting, when, on the road, he broke out in loud cries for mercy, which he continued until he obtained it. The succeeding day he returned in company with his friend to his long-forsaken and much-injured father; and, on entering his dwelling, fell on his trembling knees and asked forgiveness. He received the best robe. Is not this making 'every whit whole?' What a heavenly banquet this must have been! Unto Him, then, that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, be all the glory!

"Yours, as ever, in the bonds of a free gospel,

WM. SWAYZE.

"*Sharon, May 6, 1838.*"

THE END.

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